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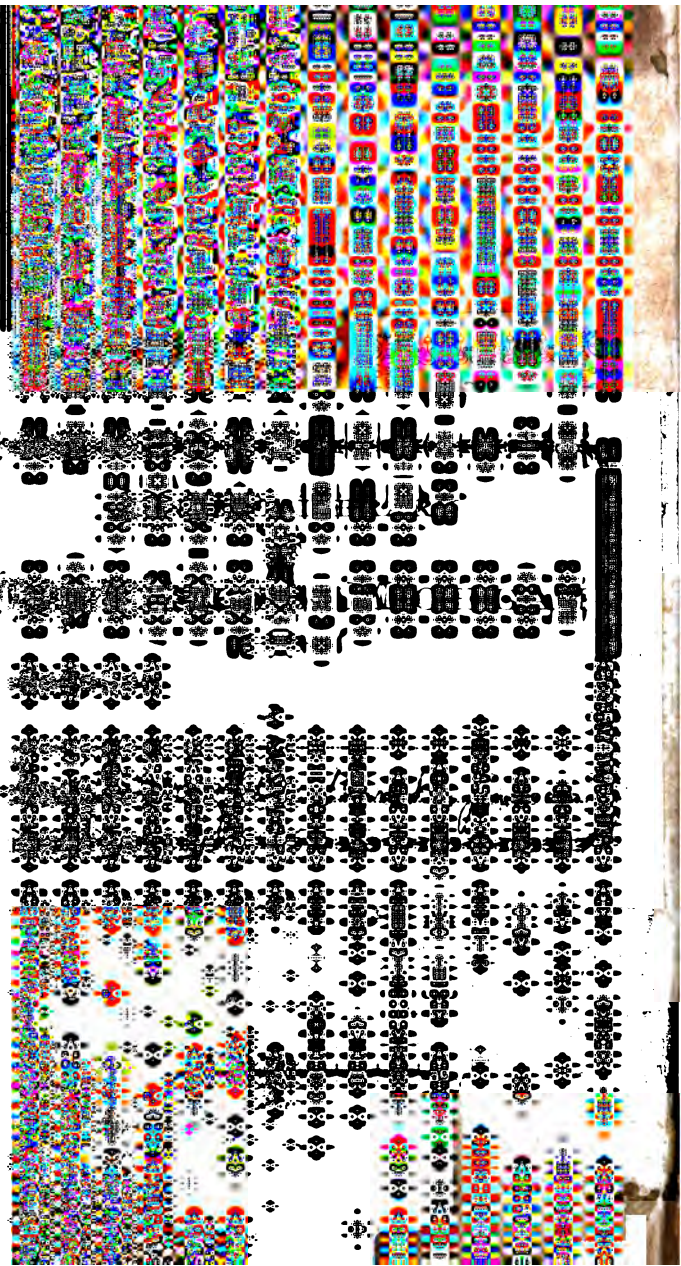
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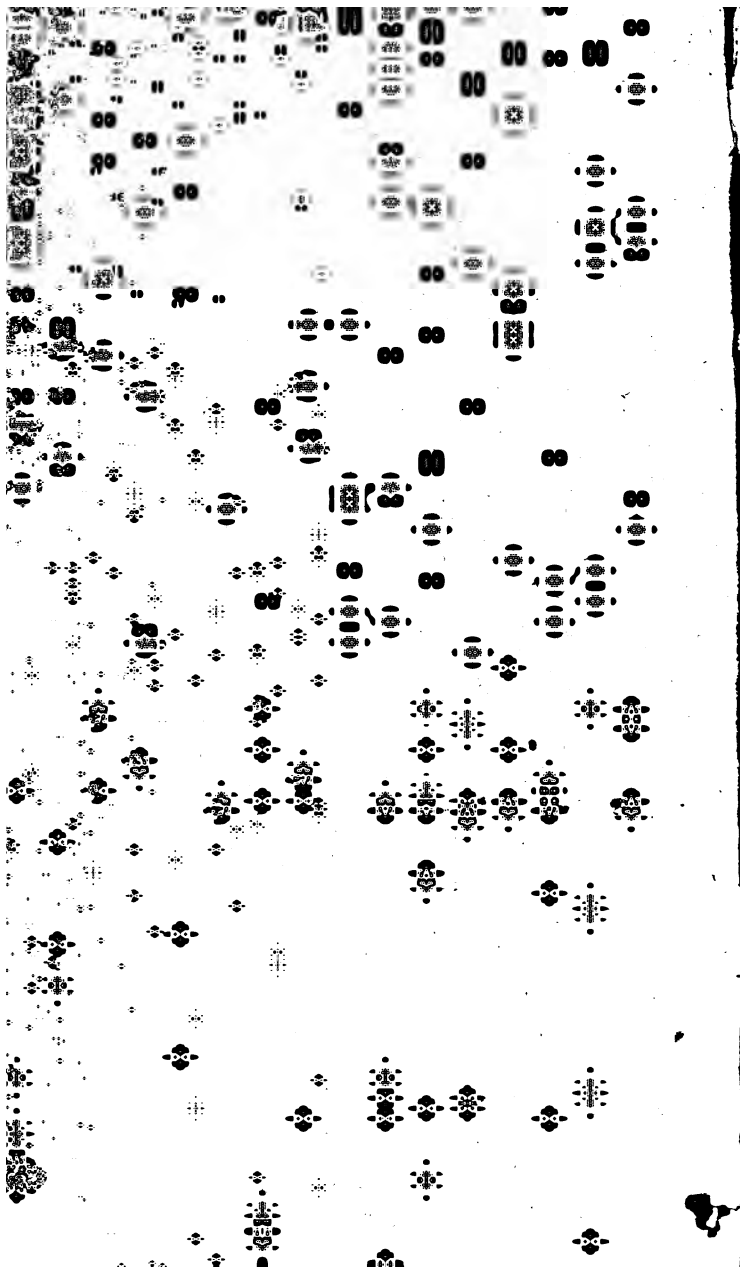
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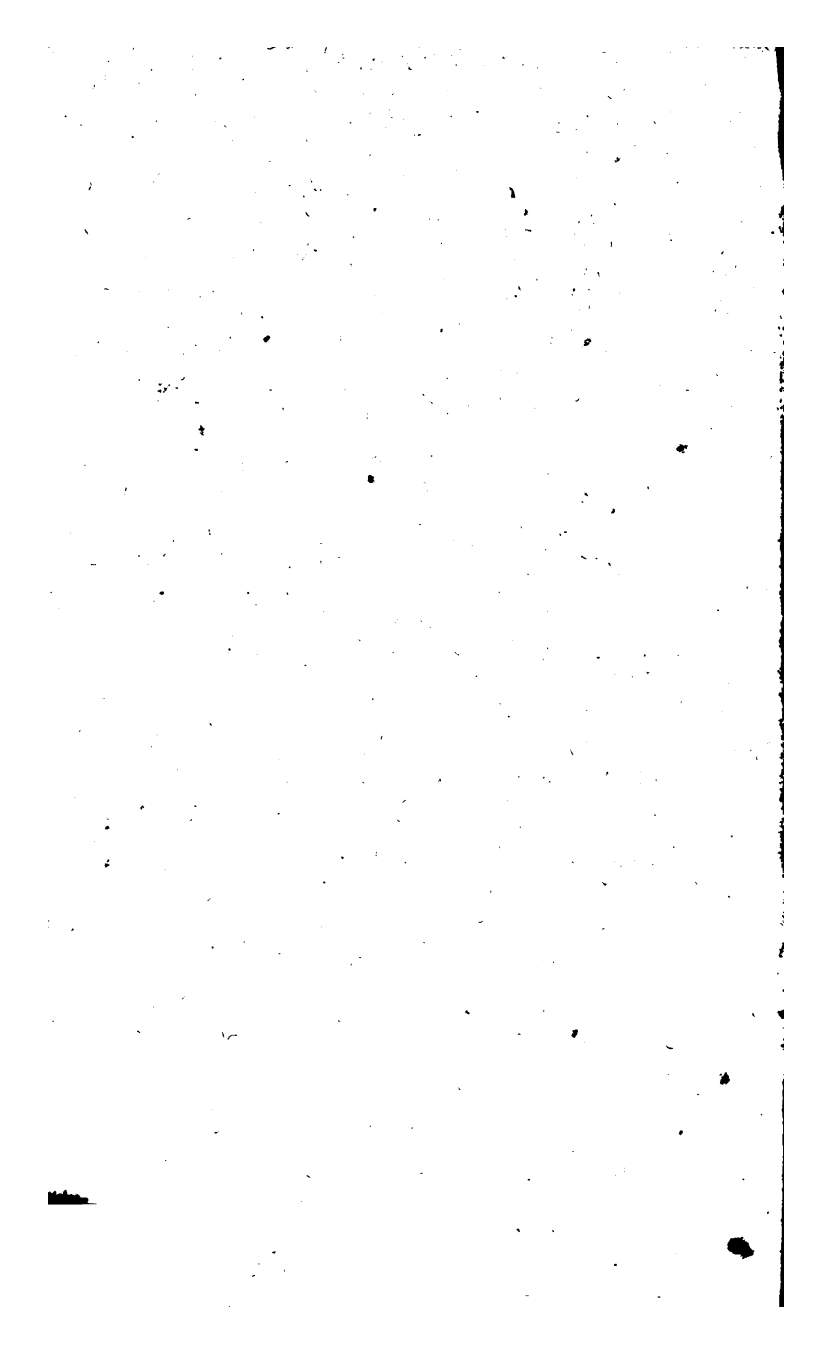
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LETTERS

FROM THE LATE

REV. WILLIAM ROMAINE, M. A.

Rector of St. Andrew Wardrobe, and St. Ann
Black Friars; and Lecturer of
St. Dunstan's in the West;

TO A FRIEND;

91103

ON THE MOST IMPORTANT SUBJECTS,

During a correspondence of twenty years.

PUBLISHED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS,

BY THOMAS WILLS, A. B.

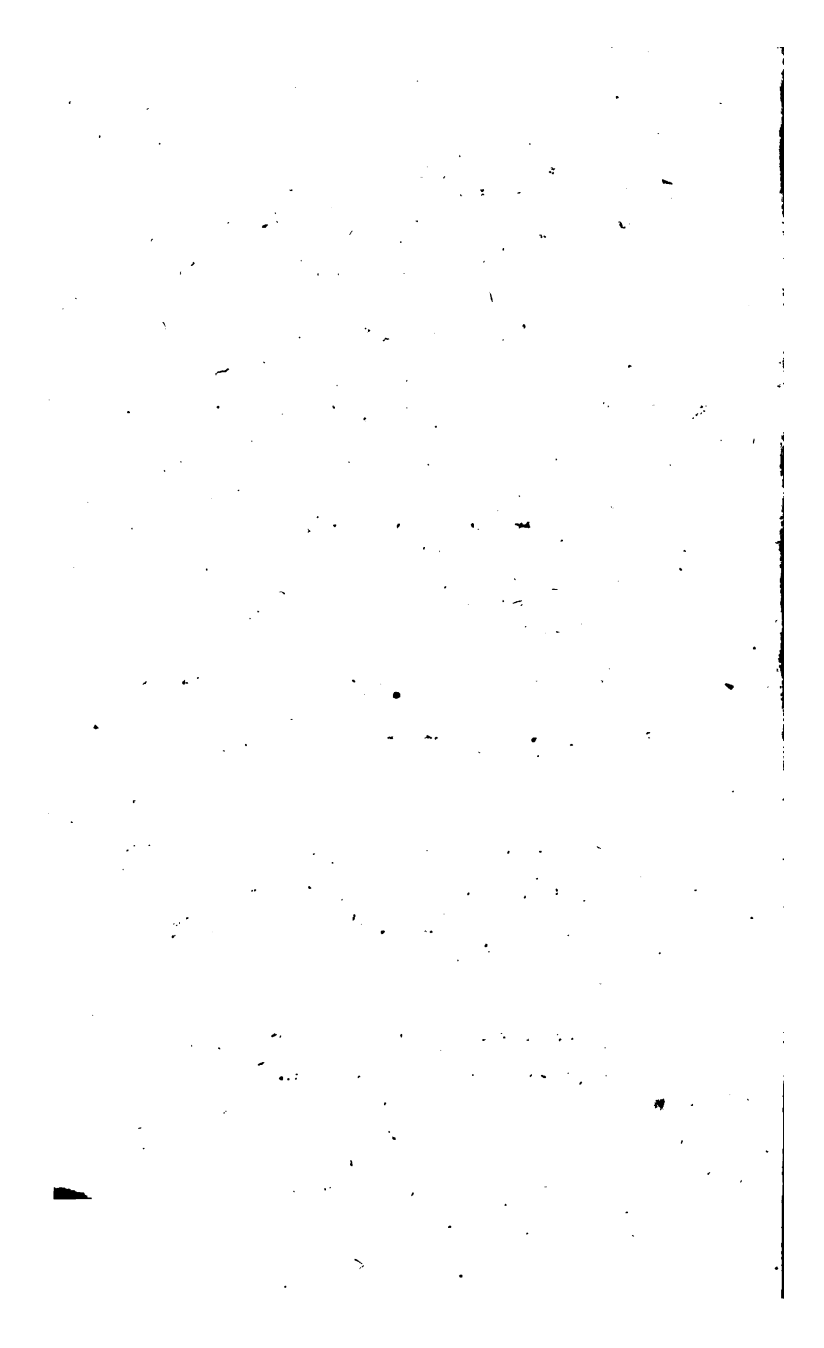
Minister of Silver Street Chapel, and formerly
of Magdalen Hall, Oxford.

NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J.

RE-PRINTED BY AMBROSE WALKER,

For RICHARD SCOTT, Bookseller and Stationer,
Pearl-Street, New-York.

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1809



PREFACE.

THE following Letters, it is presumed, need no confirmation of their authenticity, nor any recommendation of their invaluable contents, to those who knew and esteemed their late excellent author. The manner and style, almost peculiar to himself, of making CHRIST the ALL in ALL, in the glory of his person, the efficacy of his blood and righteousness, and the fulness of his salvation, proclaim aloud, these were written by no other than *William Romaine* : they prove also, to a demonstration, that Jesus was his darling theme, in his closet, as well as the pulpit ; in his private correspondence, as in his public discourses. Nor, indeed, was this holy man of God ever in his element, but when he was making mention of his divine Master's name and righteousness only, of which it might be literally said he knew no end.

The Editor pledges himself to the public, that these Letters are faithfully printed from the originals, in the hand-writing of their venerable author ; and he flatters himself he is bringing glory to his adorable Lord, as well as rendering an essential

PREFACE.

service to the church, by preserving this invaluable treasure from oblivion; which God in his providence hath thus put into his hands, he trusts, for this very purpose. Nor will his prayers be wanting, that every reader of this precious collection may, by the divine blessing, reap the greatest benefit from its perusal; and have cause to glorify the Great Head of the Church, who had so abundantly blessed this incomparable minister's labours in his life, for accompanying, with the unction of the Spirit, these his posthumous letters; by which, though dead, he yet speaketh.

Editor.

LETTERS

FROM THE LATE

REV. WILLIAM ROMAINE, M. A.

LETTER I.

Dec. 28, 1762.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I DO not forget you, nor your last favour. Till memory fail me, I hope, in a grateful mind, to retain a sweet sense of your kindness to me. Blessed be his name! I have a desire put into my heart, by my heavenly lover, to spread his fame and glory, as far as my tongue can reach. And for what else do I take up my pen, but to make mention of HIM, even of HIM ONLY? the favourite theme of his redeemed on earth—the triumph of the same redeemed, when they come to Sion

with everlasting joy upon their heads and in their hearts. My meditation of him is now sweet. In one single point of view I am beholding him, and in that he is all glorious. O that the faithful witness for him may give you to feel, what I have felt, of his incarnate love. May the Spirit glorify in your soul that greatest, that standing miracle of Jehovah's everlasting grace, by letting you know, that *for you* a child was born, *for you* a son was given, even Immanuel himself—God *with us*, and God *for us*. I will try to lead you, by the light of revelation, into some of the wonders of this transaction, as they have been manifested with life and power unto my own heart.

The scripture is a full description of the purposes of the divine will from eternity to eternity. Therein we find a council held, before all worlds, between the Holy Trinity, and the decrees of this council confirmed by the covenant and oath of each of the divine persons. This was the great contrivance of heaven, and it lay in the bosom of Jehovah with infinite delight. He viewed it, as the richest display of all his divine perfections, in which, and for which, his glory would be admired, and enjoyed by his creatures for ever and for ever. Immanuel was the centre of this covenant—his becoming surety for his people—taking flesh for them—living and dying, that the divine

honours of the holiness; and truth, and justice of the Godhead might shine forth in full-orbed glory, for shewing mercy to poor sinners.—This was, this is, this will be, the eternal subject of praise. Hear how the Father triumphs in the Son of his love—*Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth.* And again, with a voice from heaven, *This is my BELOVED SON, in whom I am well pleased.* All the councils, decrees, and works of Jehovah terminate, yea begin and end in this blessed Immanuel; and, therefore, when the angels were created, the purpose of Jehovah's taking flesh was manifested to them, and proclamation was made—*Let ALL the angels of God worship him.* Pride arose in the heart of Lucifer and his companions—their will opposed the will of the eternal Three in this matter, for which they were cast out of heaven, and have opposed Christ and his people ever since.

Then this world was created for the carrying into execution the purposes of the everlasting covenant. Man, the object of the Deity's delight, as made in the image of God—part of two worlds—a body of earth—an immortal spirit—by the one connected to matter and sense, by the other to God the Father of spirits. The enemy of Jesus attacked Eve, and beguiled her through his subtlety: Adam was not deceived, but fell by listless-

ing to his material and sensual part. He preferred his wife to God, and so lost his image, knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.

Upon this the revelation of the Covenant was made, and the incarnation of Jehovah was made known, as the ground of faith and hope, and of return again to God in the way of love and gratitude. As clear as words can speak, and signs declare, the promised seed of the woman was to attack Satan, and was to bruise his head, where his poison lies, and thereby to deliver his people: For this purpose the Father sent him into the world, that he might deliver us from the power of darkness, and translate us into the kingdom of his dear Son. I believe, from the evidence of Scripture, that Adam, and all believers downwards, had as clear a view of the incarnation of Jehovah, and of the reasons for his taking flesh, as you and I have, and, with as warm hearts, as we can have, they rejoiced in the God of their salvation. Hear one of them, how he stands amazed at this miracle of mercy: *But will God indeed dwell with men on the earth?* And mind the pious breathings of his holy father—how he longed for Christmas! *O! that the salvation was come unto Israel out of Sion; O! that the Lord would deliver his people out of captivity, then shall Jacob rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.* That he would

come, was the ground of believers' hope in every age, and there were many of them waiting, when he came, who blessed God for letting them see with their eyes his great salvation. At the fixed moment, when the fulness of time was come, there was a chosen vessel most graciously fitted and humbled for this miraculous conception. She was highly favoured, high in grace, meek and lowly in heart, and of her, by the power of the Holy Ghost, was that holy child conceived—of her, the virgin mother, was he born—a babe, helpless as we are. Here is *Love*! O what a miracle, God incarnate! and yet like us in all things—an *infant*! Be astonished, ye heavens, and adore thou earth, this miracle of miracles.

He is born among us, grows up, as we do, a child, a youth, a man—true and very man. But O the rapturous thought—He is Jehovah. Think, O think, what that blessed woman felt, when she broke out in this sweet hymn: *My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God MY SAVIOUR.* There is my honour, not that he is my son, but that he is GOD MY SAVIOUR: He took my nature, that I might take his: He lived for me, that by his obedience I might be made righteous: He suffered my punishment, that I might never suffer it: He bore my curse, to redeem me from the curse of the law: Ho.

was forsaken of God his father, that I might never be forsaken: He died to give me life: He rose again to take possession of life for me: He ascended in our nature, and is glorified in it: What he has, I shall have: His honours, his crown and dignity, his fulness of joy and bliss: All, all is mine: What he is, what he was, is for me: for he is GOD MY SAVIOUR. Happy, thrice happy, Mary, virgin-mother! yea, happy, thrice happy too, Mrs. — Is not the new-born king, your king? Is not the child Jesus, your God? He is, he is; you cannot deny it. O come then, my dear friend, let us praise his precious name, and let us magnify his love together. Soon, yet a very little while, and we shall be with him; we shall be *like* him. O what a thought is that, *LIKE HIM!* yes, when we come where he is, the glory of that sun of righteousness will shine upon us, yea will shine into us; and he will make us what he is. We shall then be happy partakers of all that was with delight in the breast of Jehovah from eternity; all will be fulfilled. The Father's richest love, the most exalted grace of the Spirit, will flow, through the infinitely blessed Immanuel, into all his glorified members. This is the accomplishment of the everlasting covenant. In this the eternal Three will take eternal delight. Jehovah will rest in his love. And, through that God-man,

will the God-head have full, perfect, and everlasting glory, honour, worship, blessing, and praise, from the full choir. You will sing aloud, in as high a key as any one of them all: complain now you may, and of yourself you *ought*, but then it will be ALL praise—all wonder—that *you* should be chosen, elect of God, partaker of his covenant-love; this distinguishing grace will make you a happy, willing debtor to Immanuel for ever and ever.

Thus looking backward or forward, I see all the purposes and works of God bearing respect to this wonderful person. He was set up from everlasting as the Alpha, and he will be to everlasting the Omega: for in all things he must have the pre-eminence. He has it above. O that we may ascribe more of it to him below. And you will, if you can pierce with the eagle-eye of faith within the veil. There you will behold Immanuel enthroned, and all the host of heaven worshipping at his feet, admiring and adoring, because sharing in his divine excellencies. The beauty of this sight makes an eternal heaven. Then, if your faith have any ears to hear, listen: O, what melody do they make! What notes do these golden harps strike! What voices accompany them! What a harmony! The words I understand—they are singing *Salvation to our God, who sitteth*

upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever. But their manner of singing is peculiar to the place. The air can form no such sounds. They can be only in the element of heaven. When your faith comes down from this high flight, and it is not capable of being long there, then look around you, and whatever object your eyes first fix upon, if they be spiritually exercised, you will see some ray of our Immanuel's glory. The book of nature is the outward record of his fame. Some of his great achievements are engraved in every part of the creation. The sun, moon, and stars; the earth, with all its productions, in full concert, join the cho'r above, and, in perfect unison, sound forth the glory of our Immanuel. And suppose I direct your eye to an object, which I know you do not like to look at—YOURSELF. Even there I can find, O that you may, as great a proof of the Redeemer's glory, as any where else upon earth: for what are you? Are you not a poor, miserable, helpless sinner? His crown depends upon his saving such. What do you feel within you—tell all your complaints. These just fit you to live on the Saviour's fulness. Look at your outward estate, tell me that part of it, which does not display the Saviour's glory. What does fortune say, and health, and friends (I put myself in)—let me be their mouth: *We are all the gifts of Jesus's*

rich love.—Love him for bestowing us upon you. And the more you have, love him more. And mind, you cannot, never will, love him too much. Try—put forth all your strength—he will still be above your affection, the best, the utmost of it. I wish you much of his company this Christmas—many a sweet visit from him. When you are very familiar, put a word in for me. O how I long to be more intimate with him. But he is kind indeed, exceedingly kind. Dearest, dearest Jesus; may he never leave you without some token of his love! Paper fails. Farewel.

W. R.

LETTER II.

Lambeth, Jan. 18, 1763.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I OFTEN remember you in the best place, and for the best purposes: But cannot bring myself to love the writing of letters; yet I have again taken up my pen to wish you every spiritual blessing purchased by the life and death of our incarnate God; and that will make you as happy as you can be on this side of heaven. In this new year, may you grow in the knowledge of the excellency of his most adorable person, of his completely finished salvation, and of your own particular interest in it: and, having these believing views, may you glorify him by living happily upon his fulness! I know a little of these matters, and but little; yet I am sitting, abashed at my ignorance, at my master's feet. He has made me willing to hear his words, and I find his lips so full of grace, that I cannot spare a moment for my Homer or Virgil, my favourite Tully or Demosthenes. Adieu, for ever, to all the classics. I see a heavenly life, as well as a matchless beauty in my Lord's words;

and though I am a dull scholar, yet he is a blessed master, He keeps me waiting upon him; day by day, trusting nothing to my own understanding, but listening continually to his instruction: so he gets all the glory of making me wise unto salvation. To this great prophet may you repair for instruction, all this year! He teaches, as never man taught. His doctrine is with power and demonstration of the Spirit. He can so humble your pride, that you shall be as dependant on him as a new-born babe; and then, having emptied you of your own carnal reason, and false wisdom, he will enlighten you, by his Word and Spirit, with saving truth. Here the humblest scholar learns the most: indeed he has learned the most; for our highest lesson is to learn, how to live upon him, who was made of God unto us wisdom; and he, who relies most upon him for that wisdom, will certainly be the wisest. If the whole world was mine, and I could purchase what I would with it, I would give it all to be a scholar made poor in spirit at Christ's feet: and what then can I wish, my dear friend, better, than to be one of his little children, whom he teaches his mind and will? Only I could wish you more humbled, that you may more perfectly learn the two blessed truths, which he is exalted to teach his people; namely, to believe in his blood and righteousness, and to live upon his grace and power.

His prophetic office is to teach us, how to be always *safe*, by believing in him, and always *happy*, by living upon him. He has the residue of the Spirit with him, and he sends him into the believer's heart, to be always preaching this most comfortable doctrine, that whatever he wants for his acceptance at the bar of justice, it is perfectly to be had, and freely in the fulness of the Lord Christ. Sins as red as scarlet, sins as numerous as the stars, or as the sand upon the sea-shore innumerable, and nature as black as hell, a heart as wicked as the devil, the divine and eternally precious blood of Jesus, can so cleanse and purify, that not one spot shall remain: for he is Almighty. He has all power in heaven and earth to pardon sin. If I had been guilty of all the sins of Adam and Eve, and of all their descendants to this day, yet, believing in him, I should be safe: because his blood cleanseth from all sin. And, in Christ, the believer has a better righteousness than that of the angels; theirs is finite, his is infinite—a better righteousness than that of our first parents in paradise, theirs was the righteousness of a creature, and they lost it; this is the righteousness of God, and it is an everlasting righteousness, never to be lost. It is the righteousness in which the saints stand before God, for ever and ever. When the holy spirit takes of these things of Christ, and

preaches them to the heart, oh, what a sweet peace follows! For the believer then finds himself saved from all the miseries of sin, and entitled to all the blessings of eternal glory. And being thus persuaded of his safety, by believing in the atoning blood of our great high priest, then the holy spirit teaches him how to live upon Christ, and how to make use of Christ's fulness. On our learning this lesson depends our comfortable walk heaven-wards: for Christ does not give us a stock of grace, and expect us to improve it by being faithful to grace given. No, no; that is not his way. Our souls must depend upon him, as our bodies do upon the elements of this world. Every moment we must live by faith upon his fulness, and be every moment receiving out of it grace for grace. And this is our happiness; to have all in Christ. A beggar in myself, but rich with unsearchable eternal riches in him. Ignorant still in myself, but led and taught by his unerring wisdom. A sinner still, but believing in his blood and righteousness. Weak and helpless still, but kept by his almighty love. Nothing but sorrow in myself, nothing but joy in him. Oh! this is a blessed life. No tongue can tell what a heaven it is, thus to live by faith upon the Son of God. Thanks be to him, I know a little of it, and I

cannot but heartily pray that you may know more of it this year than you ever did. Surely I could not have thought some years ago, that there was such an heaven upon earth as I now find—blessings for ever on the Lamb! May you find it more and more! Sweet Jesus! keep you my dear friend.

Yours,

W. R.

LETTER III.

Lambeth, March 26, 1763.

THANKS to my dear friend for her kind letter this morning! The subject enquired after is what I have been long exercised about, both in my own soul and in my ministry. And for the sake of weak believers, and to save myself great trouble in continually conversing with these persons, I resolved to write a little treatise upon the subject. I trust my time and strength, what I have and am, is now the Lord's. I wish he may use

as he pleases for his own glory. My writings are to set forth his praise, and to exalt his salvation. The enclosed plan will shew you what I propose, and to make it more easy to be understood, I shall relate it by way of experience, giving an account of the *Life of Faith*, as it was begun in one of my acquaintance, and carried on to this day, he being now a father in Christ; and I shall make remarks upon it as I go on. The subject is but little known. I pray you, my dear friend, forget not me, nor my book. Beg of the Lord Christ to bless it. If he smile upon it, it will be useful to his people. That is my highest wish. May it be profitable and useful to your soul.

I have many letters to write to-night, and yet I could not help acknowledging the receipt of yours. To a precious Jesus I commend you. To his love and to his power leave all your matters. What *cannot*, what *will* not he do for you, if you do but trust him? Are they not all happy in heaven? It is his happiness. They have it from him. Trust him, and he will not only bring you safe there, but also make you happy by the way. Oh! what a savor is there in his name! I did but just mention him, and I can scarcely stop my pen; his love so warms my heart. Dear precious Jesus, thou

art above all blessing and praise, fill my friend's heart with thy love, and make her rejoice in thy finished salvation. My kind respects to Miss —, and pray tell her she cannot possibly think too highly of Christ, nor love him too much, nor live too much by faith upon him. His salvation is infinite and eternal ; The love of him for this salvation is heaven upon earth, and living by faith upon him for the present graces and the future glories of this salvation, is getting every moment fresh tokens of his love to us, and exciting fresh love to him. In short, I wish she may be married to Christ ; and then his person being hers, his honours, his estate, and all he has will be hers also. Once more to that dearest of all names, Jesus, I commend you, and am yours unfeignedly for his sake.

W. R.

LETTER IV.

LAMBETH, May 14, 1763.

BLESSED be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed you with so many blessings already, and who having begun will not cease to bless you in life and death, and for ever more! Your letter of May 2d puts me in mind of his goodness, as I wish all things may. It rejoices my very heart to see him displaying the glories of his grace far and wide, from London through Europe, from Europe to America; yea, as far as the sun travels his fame is spread. And does he not deserve it? Oh, my friend, what have we to tell of, but the loving kindness of Jesus, and what to praise, but his wonders in saving such as we are, and in saving so many of us? Blessings for ever on the Lamb! May we glorify him by resting upon him for righteousness and strength, and by living wholly upon him for grace and glory. Then all goes well, when

On all besides his precious blood,
On all besides the Son of God;
We trample boldly, and disclaim
All other Saviours, but the LAMB.

As to what you mention about, I know not what to say. It is in the best hands. He knows what to do. Let him alone. Remember he is the head of the church, and he will look after his own matters, and well too. At present I see not my way clearly from London. Here my master fixed me, and here I must stay till he call me to some other place. When he would have me to move, he will let me know his will. Besides, what am I? What does it signify where I am? A poor dumb dog, the vilest, the basest, of all the servants of my Lord. If you could see what is passing for any one hour in my heart, you would not think any thing of me; you would only admire and extol the riches of Jesus's love. Wonderful it is, that he should set his heart upon such a very incarnate devil, and humble me so as to make me willing to be saved by his sovereign grace; and that he should send such an one to preach his gospel, and bless it too to many souls (while every sermon covers me with shame and confusion) oh, this is wonderful, wonderful, eternally to be admired, grace! What cannot he do, who can form a preacher out of such a dry rotten stick, fit for nothing but the fire of hell. Glory, glory be to him alone, and for ever, and for ever more. All the tongues in heaven, and in earth,

men and angels throughout eternity, cannot praise him enough for what he has already done for my soul, and therefore I am, and I shall be content to be, a poor bankrupt debtor for ever. Hereby I shall be enabled for ever to exalt him, and to put the crown upon his head, and that is all I want. It will be heaven enough to join that blessed company, who are crying, *Worthy is the Lamb* (but none else) *to receive blessing and glory, &c.* Nothing is mentioned among them but Jesus's goodness, and he does not leave himself without witness among us poor sinners. He has been doing miracles of mercy for Lady H—— and as she herself says, *In the midst of judgment he remembered mercy.* You have heard, I suppose of Lady S——'s illness. She had a violent fever for about seventeen days, and the physicians did not apprehend she was in any great danger, although she was near her end. On Thursday morning about four o'clock, the Lord took her to himself. O what a stroke was that, say you, to Lady H——! No, indeed; it was all mercy, all love, like the rest of Jesus's gracious dealings with his people. During her illness, Lady H—— had every day many promises given her of God's kindness to her daughter; all which she interpreted in a carnal sense, like the Jews, and thought her

daughter would recover, and do well again, By this mean she was wonderfully supported, and her spirits were kept up to the last. And when the Lord let her see things were otherwise intended than she thought, then he had prepared for her a fresh fund of comfort. For such was Lady S——'s behaviour, and such her speeches, from the beginning of her illness, that there is no doubt but she died happy in the arms of Jesus. My dear friend, if I had time to tell you all the particulars of her death, your soul would abundantly rejoice, and all that is within you would bless the God of your salvation. To him she committed herself, trusted him, found him faithful, and declared over and over again, that in him she was happy. Her last words to her mother, when she took her leave, were these: Lady H—— had said, "My dearest child, how do you feel your heart? are you happy?"—She answered, lifting up her head from the pillow, which she had not done for several days, *I am happy, exceedingly happy in Jesus*—then she kissed Lady H—— and presently went home. Although my lady bears this loss so well, yet she feels it. She is but a woman, and though a gracious one, yet grace does not destroy nature. She is a parent, and at present incapable of writing. I am yours in Jesus.

W. R.

LETTER V.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I CANNOT resist the opportunity, though I can but write two or three lines, to thank you for your last letter, and for your kindness to me expressed in it. I thank God for the contents. What you say of yourself is to me very comfortable, because I see how the Spirit of God is leading you. He is taking you up into the highest form in the school of Christ, and is teaching you an experience which is not only next to glory, but is also glory begun. This being the hardest to learn, no wonder you should complain. I take notice of your account of your present state, of your trials, and of the exercises of your faith. A great part of your letter is upon these points : describing your self-abasement and loathing at the sight and sense of what you are in yourself, and wondering that such an one as you should be brought to know, to believe in, and to love our **JESUS**.

Now, my good friend, I must tell you, if you had written to me and desired me to give you

the character of a true christian, I should have copied it from your letter. I could not have left one circumstance out. All that you mention of your being tried, afflicted in body and mind, brought low, and kept low; sometimes mourning at the strength of corruption, and at the weakness of your graces; at your love to earthly relations, and at your love to our JESUS—one so strong, the other so weak. Your trials on these, and many other accounts, such like; are such as no true disciple of Christ, in your circumstances, could be without. My answer should have been, *He is exactly what Mrs. — says she is.* For in reading the scripture I can find but these two things spoken of the office of the Holy Spirit: He first enables the sinner to receive Christ by faith: and then to live upon him, so received for all things. If you examine these two rules carefully, you will see that all the teaching of the holy Spirit may be reduced to them, and if you examine yourself by the light of the word, you will have no doubt but that you are among them to whom the promise was made: all thy children shall be taught of God. For have you not renounced your righteousness, as well as your sins? have you no more dependance on your good works, than on your bad works? Is not the holy nature

of your Immanuel, his Infinitely holy life, his everlastingly precious death: is not this complete work of his the only ground of your hope? "O yes," say you, on this rock I lay my foundation, I "build all on it for time and for eternity." Very well! then certain it is, the holy Spirit has done his first work in you. He has enabled you to receive Christ, now he is carrying on his work, the second part of the same lesson, which is enabling you to live upon Christ received. This is very hard to learn, it is against nature, against our natural love for law and works, our legal lookings at self, our foolish hope, if I live longer I shall be better. O it is hard, I find it to this hour, like leaping over-board in a storm, to cast myself simply on JESUS for every thing; but it must be done. The Spirit abides with you for this purpose: *that he may take of the things of Christ, and shew them to you, and so glorify him.* When he is teaching this heavenly truth we kick against it, we pervert it. When we go on the best, we think we are at the worst. But he abides, to conquer our opposition, to set right what we pervert, and to convince us all is and shall be well. May he thus bless a word spoken to the Saviour's glory.

My dear friend, you know it pleased the Father,

that all fulness should dwell in our JESUS; it pleases the Spirit to witness of it, and to glorify it. How? in what way? why, just as he is teaching you. He is bringing you to live out of yourself upon the fulness of JESUS: mind how he does it. He shews you first that you want such a thing, then that you cannot get it any where but from JESUS, and then he leads you to think, that trusting to his faithful word, you may experience, how ready his heart, how able his hand is to supply all your need. This is a beggar's life, here's nothing but alms. We don't like it. We want some stock: if we could get it, we should like an independent fortune. But it may not be. The Spirit of JESUS will witness of nothing, and glorify nothing but the Saviour's all-sufficient grace. And therefore he sets himself against all our greatness and goodness. That he who glorieth may glory only in the Lord Christ. And when he is bringing us to this true glorifying of the Lord, we mistake, we pervert his lessons, I know I do, and I think you do. We both fail in our experience, as your letter clearly proves to me.

If you ask me how you may become a better scholar? as I have been taught, I would gladly inform you.

Read and pray for more SELF-KNOWLEDGE:

God's word and Spirit will teach you nothing about yourself, but what will humble you to the dust, and keep you there. Read and pray for more knowledge of JESUS, his person, God-man : his salvation-work, infinitely and everlastingly perfect : he yours, now he is received ; and all he has, and all he is, as JESUS, yours in title, and, so far as you believe, yours now in possession.

Read and pray for more EARTH, that what you have a title to, you may take possession of, and so make constant use of it. Your estate is great, immensely great. Use it and live up to it ; as you do in temporals, so do in spirituals. Your money, your land, your air, your light, your meat and drink, and house and clothing, these you use : but you have not them *in* you : only being yours, they are used *by* you. So do by Christ. When the Spirit would glorify JESUS, he humbles you. When he would glorify his fulness, he makes you feel your emptiness. When he would bring you to rely on his strength, he convinces you of your weakness. When he would magnify the comforts of JESUS, he makes you sensible of your misery. When he would fix your heart on his heaven, he makes you feel your deserved hell. When he would exalt his righteousness, you find you are a poor miserable sinner. Can you, my friend,

practise this ; let nothing keep you from JESUS. Whatever you need, whatever you feel wrong, may it bring you to the Saviour's fulness : O that all things may help forward your acquaintance with him. I except nothing, neither sin nor sorrow : I would carry all to him, as one great lump of sin, and receive all good from him, as the only storehouse of good for wretched sinners. In this communion I desire to grow : for this I desire to live : O that you and I may learn it more, and get every day nearer fellowship with our sweet JESUS, growing up into him in all things.

See how my pen runs on as fast as I can write. My very heart and soul are enamoured with him : I love his name : I adore his person ; he is my heaven. O what treasures are there in our Jesus. May his glorious Spirit witness for him to your heart. Believe me your very sincere friend, a well wisher in that matchless lover of sinners, and one of the chief of them.

W. R.

LETTER VI.

BRIGHTELMSTONE, Sept. 1, 1763.

I HAVE at last got a spare hour to write to my dear friends at —, and to tell them how much I wish all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus may be theirs. Since I left you, all has been hurry, travelling from place to place, till kind Providence has brought me to Brighthelmstone, where I hope for a little rest; not so much to my soul. Blessed be the grace of sweet Jesus, I have that; but rest from distraction, hurry, dust, heat, and want of sleep. This is a kind of haven after a storm. Not that I expect a continual calm here. It would be a sad place indeed, if there were no enemies, no warfare, no trials and troubles in it. These I must have, wherever I go; because they grow in my constitution, and are nourished in the body of sin: and because without them I should not know how to prize Christ. But I find my retired and private times are the best for my own soul, as more public times are for others: and yet that sweetest blessed Jesus, when I am in his work,

takes care of me, and, when I am watering others, he does not leave me unwatered myself. I am a witness for him. I have been preaching of his salvation many years in the midst of a crowd, living all the time in a great hurry, and yet I gain every year some fresh knowledge of myself, some more knowledge of my incarnate God, and some steadier trust and dependence upon him; and I can say, it is good for me that I have been a poor despised preacher of Christ Jesus.

Now what can I wish my dear friend more for her peace and blessedness, than that the dear Saviour may do for her, what he has done for me, only in a greater degree: for I am sure it is a growing thing. In the knowledge of ourselves we may certainly increase. There is a mystery of iniquity in us, which we shall not perfectly comprehend as long as we live. But, as we make fresh discoveries of it, we shall see our want more of Christ, and thereby get more knowledge of the great mystery of godliness. The sense of our manifold wants, will magnify the riches of his grace in supplying them. So, the lower, man is abased, the higher is the Saviour exalted. And this will of course bring us to make more use of him, to trust him more, and to live more upon him, which is the blessedness of faith. When I

feel the depth of my distress and wants, and the infinite riches of Jesus's grace to supply them, then faith does its office aright, when it is not discouraged by a sense of many increasing wants, but is thereby made to cleave closer to Jesus, and to prize him more. This is my present state. And in it I have at times a pleasure, which cannot be described. The height of Jesus's grace is so exactly suited to the depth of my distress, that I am ready to glory in it. I would not be without one single want. My wants are my happiness. They make Christ so exceedingly desirable, that fresh wants add to him, in my eyes, fresh beauty. It is a pleasure to be in his debt, yea, the greatest I know of. I would not have inherent righteousness, if I could get it for nothing. I would not be rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing from him, if it was possible. His glory is my heart's delight, and therefore, I love to glorify him by living upon his fulness. *I, nothing;* He, *ALL in ALL!* When it is thus with me, I am safe and happy. I am the greatest fool that ever lived—I feel it—and that makes his wisdom so precious. I am the chief of sinners, I find it daily, and that makes his blood and righteousness my continual delight. I have as many evil tempers as the devil; oh, how they stir, and fight against the

Spirit! but Jesus is my sanctification. He has given them their death's wound, and, by and by, they will expire, and be no more. In myself I deserve hell every moment; but Jesus is my redemption, my eternal redemption. Oh! how my heart loves him. He knows it well. And if I am ever vouchsafed (why should I doubt it?) to see him face to face, I will acknowledge him to be ALL in ALL, and rejoice to acknowledge it for ever. And it will be the very heaven of heavens (truly I taste something of heaven in thinking of it) to give him the glory of my crown, and to lay it low at his feet. WORTHY IS THE LAMB. Thanks be to him, I can sing this song now but in a poor strain to what I hope to do soon. Sweet Jesus bring you and me safe to the eternal enjoyment of him and his glory.

I am sorry to stop to tell you of two parcels I left at — one for you, and another for Mr. —: I hope they are come safe to hand. Enclosed in yours, was a Field's bible, the best present I could think of for your kindness to me, and another little pocket bible for dear —. One favour would I beg, if you would grant it me, and that is, for you both to read the bible over once in these little keep-sakes. I have many reasons for asking this favour, but one is peculiar to myself,

namely, that it will often put you in mind of your faithful friend in the bond of the Spirit.

W. R.

LETTER VII.

BRIGHTHELMSTONE, Sept. 26, 1763.

THE presence of dear JESUS be with my dear friend.—That presence, which turns darkness into light, sin into righteousness, misery into heaven. What can you want, if he be with you? he has such a miraculous virtue, that he can turn your weakness into strength, your mourning into joy, your death into life; so that there is not in you any evil effect of sin, but his almighty grace can make it work under him for his glory, and for your good. Oh! may his presence be with you, as long as you are in this state of weakness, and mourning, and death. Sweet JESUS keep you—nay, I know he will. His tender, loving heart loves to the end. Oh, my friend, what a

Saviour is he! Oh, how I love him! He knows I do; and yet I am ashamed to think how far below his deserts. By and by I shall do better, when you and I meet before his throne, then, then, but — I stop.

Would — be worth my acceptance? The worth of it does not come before me: but what my Master expects of me. His will must be my rule. And it has been a long time as plain to me, as that two and two make four. I am stationed by myself. I am alone in London. And while he keeps me there, I dare not move. As when he has a mind to remove me, my way will be as plain from London, as it is now to abide in it. If I hearkened to self, and wanted to run away from the cross, I know of no place so snug as —; but would you have me such a coward, as to fly, and such a one to stand by me—one, who has kept me in many battles; and one, who, I trust, will presently make me more than conqueror?

I have not time to answer your letter in other points. Only be assured of my prayers (such as they are) for your reading the bible. Remember again, Christ is the sum and substance of it all. May his Spirit breathe upon it as you read, and lead you beyond the letter, to the life-giving sense.

I have great faith about —. You will be

taken care of. Do not doubt it. The government is on Christ's shoulders, and he does all things well. Leave it to him. But he does use means; therefore pray write as soon as you have fixed on a proper person. My kind love to dear Mr. ——. I wish him as happy as my Master can make him, and then he will be one of the happiest men in this world. Our friends with you have my hearty good wishes for their better acquaintance with the precious Lord Jesus, and more faith to get more out of his fulness. To him I commend you all, and your present case at —, and am, with my wife's respects, for his sake, your faithful friend and servant,

W. R.

LETTER VIII.

LAMBETH, April 17, 1764.

My dear friend,

I HAVE just now received your letter, and thank you for the kindness you express in it to me. I am pretty well in health, and loaded with bene-

fits—nothing but mercy, rich mercy every day. All the dealings of my most precious Jesus, with my soul, are grace and love. He not only promises, and, by faith, makes me rely on him for heaven; but now, even now, I am as it were in heaven: for I live upon his heavenly blessings. Vile and base as I am, yet he lets me approach him, and converse with him freely. He vouchsafes to admit me into fellowship with him, and he opens his treasures, and says,—“All these are thine—I bought them for thee with the price of my blood, but I give them to thee as a free gift. Take this for the earnest, accept this for the pledge of all the rest: and all mine are thine.”—Yes, Lord, I believe it—on thy word do I trust, and I rely upon thy faithfulness to make it good to me. I desire to glorify thee, amidst all my wants, and sins, and miseries, by living out of myself upon thine infinite fulness. Empty me still more, blessed Lord, be daily emptying me more, that I may be capable of holding more of thy good things. What do you think of this? Is it not heaven begun? What is heaven, but the perfection of this life of grace? Believers now live with Christ; they now live upon Christ. Christ is their ALL: for the life which they now live in the flesh, they live by the faith of the Son

of God : and what a blessed life this is, I have, in some small degree, experienced ; and, what the Lord has taught me, I have endeavoured to set forth and make public for his glory, and the comfort of weak believers. The little book is finished. May my ever dear Jesus shine upon every page, as you read it, and strengthen your faith, and warm your heart with his heavenly love. I beg your prayers for a blessing on this book : I beseech you do not forget it for your own sakes and mine, and all the household of faith. To Jesus's love I commend you and Mr. —, and am, by many ties, your servant in the gospel.

W. R.

LETTER IX.

July 3, 1764.

I HAVE my dear friend's letter of the 19th of June by me, and thank you for it. You may be sure I am glad to hear the little book agrees with what God has taught you ; not glad for the author's sake, but for Christ's sake, and for yours :

For Christ's sake, because I live, and preach and write to exalt that royal Saviour.—Oh! how my heart longs to see him crowned in your soul, when you will go forth, as the command is, and see king Solomon with the crown of grace and glory on his head, wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart; then all within you will gladly bow to his sceptre—And *for your sake*, because he is begun to be crowned, since you say you have experienced some of the things in this little book. I wish I may help you, God helping me to experience more of the glorious majesty of our King of kings, when I come down and preach at — upon that text, and, when I am setting forth that sovereign prince and Saviour, may his Spirit then crown him in your conscience, and enthrone him in your heart. But I cannot come the day you mention, because it is my last Sunday at St. Dunstan's, and the week after I go down to Brighthelmston, and shall be there for a fortnight, and then set out for your place.

Till that time come, I shall be wishing you, what I am always desiring for myself, a stronger sense and clearer feeling of my wants, and more faith to live upon Jesus for the supply of them. When you have nothing in yourself to be pleased

with, all wretchedness and helplessness, then should Jesus be most precious—he being the Almighty Saviour of such a wretched helpless creature. A man that has a plentiful table thinks it a happiness, that he sits down hungry and thirsty—so should you, when every thing within you is saying—“Here you can do nothing—there you can do nothing, *without Christ*.”—Then faith should say, it is true, I cannot; but he has in him that very thing which I want, and he has promised to give it me, and on him I depend for it. Such a dependence is heaven upon earth. I find it so: nor would I have it otherwise. What would become of me, if I were rich and increased with goods, and found no need of any thing? Why then, I should not feel my want of Christ, I could not live upon him, and so should become comfortless. My dear friend, believe me I have been trying all ways to happiness, but all have failed me, till this one—and here I am settled. I want nothing, but Christ. People tell me, I must submit to this ordinance, and be joined to such a church, and come under church-discipline, and must be dipped, &c. &c. I have Christ—I want no more.—This is making Christ of him. And this saves us from ten thousand thousand snares and troubles in life. I assure you, it has brought me

such peace, as I scarce thought it possible to have in this world. Excuse me then, when I wish you poorer and poorer every day, that you may be richer in Christ. I shall not cease to remember you as above, till you hear farther from yours in that most sweet and lovely Christ, the fairest, yea, the very beauty itself, of all the fair. Oh! how I love him, and he loves a poor wretch.

W. R.

LETTER X.

HARTLEPOOL, Aug. 7, 1764.

I RECEIVED my dear friend's letter, and think she overlooks our ever adorable Jesus, in setting any value upon a poor, dirty worm. If his grace raise it from a dunghill, and set it upon a throne with his princes, who shall have the glory, the worm, or Jesus? Shall any of his due praise be given to it? God forbid! There ought to be an holy jealousy in you and me, that we rob not our God of his glory. If we do rob him of ever so little, he will wither all our comforts and

graces; but if we give him all the glory, which we cannot do, unless he be ALL, and we be nothing; then every thing will go well with us. We get exalted, as we are humbled. The lowest is the highest; which makes me fear to look at any good in myself, unless the kind hand, which gave it me, be seen at the same time; and afraid to hear of any thing good in myself, unless I am sure my Master has all the praise. The plan, upon which I act herein, is this: Long experience and many humblings have brought me to it. I have grieved to see how much of my time runs to waste, partly for want of knowing what to do, and partly through perplexity about what was done, lest it was not done aright; and therefore I was led to endeavour to bring the business of every day into a little compass, that at one view, I might satisfy myself, whether I had answered the end of living another day.

There is no doubt left about my belonging to Christ; so that this matter is not to be brought into court again. It has been tried and determined, and is now a settled point, What have I then to do? What is the work of every day?

Why, it is to be living still in a constant dependance upon the Lord Christ, and to be growing every day in the knowledge and experience of that dependance.

The dependance is thus expressed: **THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY HIS FAITH**, being justified or made just, he shall not live by any works, by any stock of grace, by being faithful to any talents received, but he shall live upon the Lord Jesus Christ by faith; receiving from him continually grace for grace.

The believer's growth in this his dependance is thus spoken of, *Grow in grace, and in the knowledge and love of God our Saviour*. **GRACE** is the free love of God to poor sinners in the whole plan of salvation—from first to last all is of grace; and in the knowledge and experience of this there is a growth. The believer learns more clearly that all is of grace, and that he has no hand in saving himself, but an empty receiving hand: Grace comes to pull him down, and to set Christ up. When the heart is established with grace, the creature is stripped quite bare, without a rag to put on, or money to buy any, or wisdom to know where to get it. Grace pulls down all high things, levels all distinctions, and leaves the poor creature nothing at all to trust in, or to boast of, but to live upon Christ's alms: So that the sense of our lost, guilty, helpless state is the only thing which can make us willing to receive a whole Christ, and the abiding sense of this will keep us willing.

to live upon a whole Christ. And while a believer lives thus, how can he grow in grace, if he be not discovering every day more of the depth of iniquity, which is in him? Grace cannot be magnified, unless nature be humbled. Jesus Christ cannot become more precious, unless SELF become more vile. As the believer sinks in his own eyes, Christ rises in his esteem. And this, in my opinion, is growing in grace. Growing in the sense of our weakness, magnifies Christ's strength—our sinfulness, his righteousness—our folly, his wisdom—our misery, his happiness—our outward sorrowful estate, his inward peace and joy. Thus the growth in the knowledge of Christ, is closely connected with the knowledge of self. And that makes me afraid of any thing, which tends to weaken this view of things; because it would weaken my dependence upon Christ. I should not see nor feel my want of him so much, which would stop the working of faith, and thereby eclipse the glory of Jesus. You see my jealousy. And indeed I have great reason for it. After all my experience, which you have read in the *Life of Faith*, I have a revolting heart. Still I would turn from, and live without Christ, if I could. Pride puts me upon it. Oh it is the very devil, that Pride; it attacks not the heel, but the heart of Christ, and wastes

to rob him of his crown—And I have so smarted for it, that the most distant approach is terrible to me. Think what you will of me, but never mention me, without mentioning that grace of my dearest Lord, who has made me all that I ever shall be, but sin and misery.

My sweet Jesus has contrived so much work for me in these parts, and he is so evidently and powerfully with us, that I cannot leave my neighbours, who crowd to hear, far more than ever, and they are to me as my own soul. We are beyond all description happy in our loving lovely Lord. Such meetings I never knew—and twice a day—and many churches open. Oh! that I could but stay—I am so knit in heart to my neighbours, and the most of them come and sit quietly to hear, that I know not how to leave them. But it must be. Adieu my friend: remember yours in our precious Immanuel.

W. R.

LETTER XI.

December 29, 1764.

ALL the blessings of this good season be with my dear friend. That man, for whom Christ was born, is the greatest, richest prince upon earth—his revenue, his honours, his mighty allies, his everlasting kingdom, are beyond all conception. Compared to what he is, and has, crowns and empires are but play-things for little children. And he comes to all his dignity, by Jehovah's taking flesh, through which wonderful event he can be made one spirit with him—He took our flesh that we might take his Spirit—He was born on earth, that we might have a new birth from heaven—He took our sins, that we might take his righteousness—and our miseries, that we might be heirs with him of his happiness: O what an astonishing transaction is this! How full of the richest grace, flowing over with everlasting love! This great and blessed event, lay in the breast of Jehovah in eternity. He ever had it in his heart, it was his beloved plan and purpose,

that he would take flesh, and display all the glories of his Godhead in the person of Jesus Christ. This was his gracious will and everlasting counsel, to which all his works have tended, and for the executing of which in its full perfection, all things are now working together. When the fulness of time was come, O what joy was there in heaven among the angels, who kept their first estate! They thought it a very high honour to be the messengers of it, even to poor shepherds, with whom they could rejoice, that their God and our God was become incarnate—BEHOLD I BRING YOU GLAD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY—glad tidings indeed: for they include all the good, which infinite mercy has to give, and the sinner can receive. Hereby light comes to them, who are sitting in darkness; and life to them who are in the shadow of death—pardon to the guilty—comfort to the mourning—liberty to the captive—strength to the helpless—and heaven to the miserable. How blessed a change do they experience, when by faith they know and can say, *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given.* For this is the saving truth, JESUS IS THE CHRIST, the man is Jehovah, God and man in one Christ, the child born is the mighty God and the Son given is the everlasting Father—the Virgin's Son is Immanuel.

God with us, and her infant babe is her eternal Saviour. Except she had believed this, she could not have been saved, nor can we; and yet it is a truth so far out of the reach of man's understanding, that he could never have thought of it, unless it had been revealed, nor can he now comprehend it, unless he be taught it of God: for no man can say that JESUS is the LORD, is JEHOVAH, but by the Holy Ghost. Here then, my dear friend, is matter of thankfulness to you and me; that we are taught this of God. Happy Christmas to us, since we have lived to hear and understand the great mystery of godliness—**GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH.** Happier still, that we believe it: for whomsoever the Holy Ghost enlightens with the knowledge of this saving truth, he also gives faith to receive it—to trust in Christ as God—to depend upon him as the almighty Saviour—to rely upon his finished work—and to lay no other foundation for any grace or glory, but the life and death of this ever-blessed God-man. This is the way in which the Holy Ghost glorifies Jesus. He gives the believer such views of the infinite fullness and everlasting sufficiency of Immanuel, that he is quite satisfied with him. His conscience is brought into sweet peace through the sprinkling of the blood of the Lamb of God, and when guilt

would arise; and unbelieving fears disturb, he is enabled through faith in Jesus to maintain his peace: because whatever rendered him hateful to God, he sees it removed by his adorable surety; and whatever God could love him for, he finds himself interested in it through the infinitely precious obedience of the Lord our righteousness. Thus he enters into the promised rest. Thus he maintains himself in it. He can desire nothing, but the Saviour has it; and when he asks, he receives it from him: so that the Saviour more than fills up all his wants—for he satisfies all his wishes: he says by sweet experience—THIS IS ALL MY SALVATION, AND ALL MY DESIRE.

And what greatly adds still to this happiness is, that it is ever, ever growing—may you and I find it so. As the believer is made to see his absolute safety in Jesus, so does he partake more of his graces and blessings. In hearing and reading the descriptions of the Lord Christ in his divine person; and in his most gracious offices, the Holy Spirit sets in with those descriptions, and presents the inestimably glorious Saviour before the eye of faith with the most attracting loveliness. All the sweets, and beauties, and joys scattered throughout the universe are only little drops out of the ocean of Jesus's fulness. There is not any

Object made to gratify any sense, but the Holy Spirit shews the believer that very thing in its highest perfection, in the infinitely rich Saviour, and gives him a delightful earnest, and by faith a foretaste of it. By which means his whole heart and soul grow entirely in love with that beauty of all beauties, and he says, and it is heaven to feel it, *This is my beloved, and this is my friend.*

I have more, far more to say, but — is waiting. Pray, my dear friend, leave for ever out of your mind and writing—IF I knew—IF I believe—O, why do you doubt. The good Lord keep you and yours. I am in bonds which cannot be broken, yours in Jesus.

W. R.

LETTER XII.

February 14, 1765.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I SHALL be filling up this paper with — first, thanking my dear Master for his kindness to

you.—From my heart I praise him—may you and yours give him the whole glory of his temporal and spiritual blessings.

Secondly, I pray him to continue his kindness to you—a thankful temper always has fresh matter for thankfulness. To praise him for the past, is the sure way to secure future mercies. Prayer and praise live and die together.

Thirdly, I tell you of his goodness to me. I am nothing but a miracle of his goodness—the most astonishing that ever was! all, all from my first breath to this I am now drawing is mere mercy and grace, and so it will be for ever and for ever. My ministry is wonderful, that such a dumb dog should speak—such a very devil in flesh should feel what he says of that eternally precious Jesus, and be the means of making others feel it, and should have no doubt of feeling it blessedly to eternity. O, what delightful views do these things give me of my sweetest Lord and dearest Jesus! He seems willing I should preach more, and have a church in the city, but he will not let it come too easily, least we should have whereof to glory. We are at ~~now~~ about it, and are like to be a great while, but in the meantime he is doing all things well. The very moment all things are ready, the church will be

opened: and, if it never is, he does not want me there, with which I am satisfied.

Fourthly, does all this teach you and me to trust this dear Lamb of God? It should teach us, I hope it does. How safely may we trust his faithfulness; how happily rest upon his almighty love. All things for the good of soul and body, are promised to him that believeth. O, that the Lord may increase your faith and mine! In an hour of need may you find him very, very near to your heart, and filling you with joy and peace in believing.

To Jesus I commend you and yours most heartily, being tied to you in him by the bonds of his everlasting love. Jesus bless you. Amen.

W. R.

LETTER XIII.

May 25, 1765.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING an opportunity of sending a note by dear Mr. ———; I could not withhold my pen. What thanks ought we to give to our gracious Lord for his mercies to you? What ought you yourself to give? Can you look back upon any part of your life, especially the last part of it, and is there any thing upon which you cannot write, **THIS IS MERCY?** O, it is all from first to last, to them who are chosen, and called, and believe, and live by the faith of the Son of God, **MERCY**—from everlasting to everlasting! A mercy before time, a mercy in time, a mercy beyond time! Where is the fountain-head, the spring of this mercy? In the covenant of the eternal **THREE**. What gives rise to it? Nothing but the mere grace and free love of the divine persons. A motive cannot arise but in the purpose and breast of God himself. But on whom

do the streams of this fountain flow with their quickening, comforting, sanctifying, glorifying streams? On the miserable, and none else; for none else are the objects of mercy. On such as you and me. Mercy has made a rich provision to supply all our wants, to pardon all our sins, to save us from all misery, to entitle us to all glory. And what! is mercy chiefly glorious in reserving all its blessings to another world? the greatest it does, but not all. ALL are now enjoyed in reversion, by faith; and all things are working together in Jesus's hands to bring about the full and final enjoyment—that the mercy, which is above all the works of God, may have for ever and ever all the glory.

So far I wrote on Saturday night, on Mr. — sending me word, he should go on Monday.

Sunday Morning.

What a mercy does this day call to our remembrance? The Saviour, risen and ascended, sends down the divine and faithful witness for himself—*He shall testify of me*—bear witness to my person, to my work, that they are both divine—my person, Jehovah self-existent—my work, as perfect as Jehovah could make it. He shall testify of my grace, how free it is, how full it is, and shall en-

able the sinner, any poor wretch, however vile in his own eyes, to trust his soul in the hands of Jesus. And, having enabled the sinner to do this, then he will testify of Jesus, that he has received him, that he is safe in the arms, and may be happy in the enjoyment of Jesus's love. Thus he will make the soul enamoured with Jesus; there will appear such consummate beauty, such infinite loveliness in his precious person, as will eclipse the glory of all other lovers. There will appear such true happiness in fellowship with him, as will quite dethrone the former idols. And, when the foolish heart would depart, he will not let it. Then will he testify of Jesus "To whom wouldst thou go? Who has eternal life to give, but him? Turn, turn again to thy rest, O my soul."

If the soul is mourning? he will testify of the joy that is in Jesus. If the soul is burdened? cast thy burden, says he, on thy Lord. If the soul has lost any creature comfort? let it go, says he, Jesus is still thy salvation, and thy great reward. If the soul is grieved with indwelling sin? it is pardoned, says he, and the Spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, hath made thee free from the law of sin and of death.

Whatever the wants of the believer are, the

Spirit's office is to testify of Jesus, **THERE IS THE THING YOU WANT**, and to glorify Jesus—**THERE YOU HAVE IT FREELY.**

My friend, what mercy is this? The Spirit Jehovah abides with you, to testify of Jesus, and that his salvation is perfect, and to glorify Jesus, by enabling you to live safe and blessed upon him, making him not only **ALL**, but also **ALL in ALL**. And, when he has taught you thus to glorify Jesus, he will keep you, O, that's sweet! by his almighty power, till he bring you to the heaven of heavens—the sight and enjoyment of dear Jesus, eternally dear and lovely Jesus.

Is it indeed so? Why then, commit yourself to this glorious Immanuel. Wait for the Spirit's teaching you all his ways, and shewing you all are well. Remember he has lent you your chief earthly comfort only just so long as he pleases. When he takes it, hush, not a sigh, *Be still, and know that I am God, a sovereign*—This commands resignation: but the Lamb's voice is all love. I take him away, that you may love me more, and be happier in my love. Let it be so, my dear Lord: be thou but present, all is well. The Lord bless you and yours,

W. R.

LETTER XIV.

LAMBETH, July 13, 1765.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I COULD not answer your kind letter till this day, my cause has been to be heard from day to day before my Lord Chancellor, but put off, and yesterday was put off to the next term: so that I have, through the good will of my God, an opportunity of seeing you once more, and to talk together by the way of our ever lovely, infinitely precious Jesus, who has so won my heart, that I have no relish (like one in love) to talk of any thing but my BELOVED. Tuesday morning, I purpose to set out, and hope to be at — about noon, Wednesday next, where I shall be glad to meet (at the old house) some of my dear fellow travellers from —. Oh, that our meeting may be to Jesus's glory! I am in the best of bonds of Jesus's own tying. Yours,

W. R.

LETTER XV.

LAMBETH, Aug. 20, 1765.

My dear friend in our common Lord—of whose mercies I am an amazing monument—what can I say to you of me and mine, but write upon all—GRACE—GRACE. I will give you an account of my life some weeks past, and you will see the goodness of my kind Jesus in all his dealings with me. When I was at Hartlepool, I heard from London, that Dr. Griffith thought my wife was sick unto death, and he had no hopes of her recovery. This alarmed me. And I set out immediately, and stopped not till I got to London, where I found things as bad as I had been made to believe. But Dr. Griffith gave her something, to which the Lord gave his blessing, and it abated the fury of her distemper, God having mercy on her, and on me also. Lady H—, pressing me still to come down to —, my wife gave leave for me to go, and I went down to Derby Saturday se'nnight. We had there a most refreshing

time—Fifteen pulpits were open—Showers of grace came down—Sinners in great numbers awakened, and believers comforted. Mrs. — was taken ill, and was ordered to Bath, which broke up the family—they went away two days after I got down—But I staid to preach all the week, and especially on Sunday last at Derby, where I was much opposed by the mayor and the churchwardens, and the Arian party, but the Lord stood by me, and I was in the morning at the great church, and in the afternoon at St. Warburgh's. In the evening I got into the fly alone (*in good company*) and, upon coming home last night, I found my wife had relapsed, and was again in danger, but again the great physician had interposed, and we are in hopes all will be well again soon. Mercy, mercy is above all his works.

In these proceedings of divine providence, I admire several things, such as—

First, how odd it appears, that friends, so dear and beloved as you at — should be passed by. When I went through —, it was night, and, thinks I, who would have thought I should have gone by Lady M—'s door, without calling? It is the Lord's doing.—As to you, I only sent my prayers for you, of which I hope you had the benefit.

Secondly, here is a plain lesson for you.—Did you not expect me? Did you not build upon my coming? You were disappointed. Why? That you might cease from man. Oh it is good to be weaned from creature props and dependences. Whatever does this, is a great blessing. If, therefore, my not coming has made you come nearer to Christ, I would therein rejoice; yea, and therein I do rejoice. What of me? Down with me, and up with Christ. But

Thirdly, I can assure you my heart was divided; I wanted to be at home, and I wanted to stay. Duty and affection called me one way, in spirit I was and am with you, and hope ever so to be. I am, with great respect, your obliged friend and servant,

W. R.

LETTER XVI.

November 1, 1765.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOUR letter of September 9th. would not have lain so long without an answer, but it was

at my house at Lambeth, to which I expected daily to go from Brighthelmstone to Bath. But Lady H—— having excused my attendance at the dedication of her new chapel, I therefore sent to town for my letters, and, among the rest, found yours: for which what shall I say? What am I, the very vilest of the vile, that any of the Lord's people should look on me? But to think of his looking on me, whose eyes are a flame of fire, and yet to look with love; O what a humbling thought is that! I declare, the more I daily learn of myself, I grow more amazed, how Jesus should love such a one. But he is all grace, or rather grace is Jesus—not something distinct from him, but he himself—His name, because it is his nature. Unto him be the praise of your kindness to one, who has not a single thing to recommend him to your regard, but what Jesus's free grace has most marvellously bestowed upon him. Let him have the glory: for he richly deserves it *all*. Whatever good I receive in this world, spiritual or temporal, I am indebted for it to his mere bounty—I crown him for it—Take it off my head, and put it upon his. This is heaven below: for they are doing the same in heaven above. As we throw the crown of grace at his feet, so do they

the crown of glory. Thus through him I thank you for your letter, and for all your favours.

As to what you write about my not calling on you in my journey; your disappointment was not, could not be greater than mine. I learned from it a good lesson. It is very profitable to take notice of what providences say; they have a tongue, and speak loudly, and the spiritual ear hears, and receives instruction. You see what man is, and what dependance is to be laid upon him—As I was going along the road—I heard a voice saying, CEASE YE FROM MAN—from yourself, from others—put no confidence in them, in your own good, in their good, or in any good to be received from them. The command is—Put not your trust in *Princes*, nor in *any* child of man, be he wise, or great, or esteemed good—Nay look not at them, but, with a single eye, LOOK unto Jesus. In him you will see every thing to put your confidence in. *Grace*, matchless grace in his heart and lips, *beauty* beyond compare, *riches* unsearchable, *honour* infinite, *righteousness* everlasting, *holiness* holy making, and that for ever. And all these he has to give, freely to give to the unworthy. Look at him believing, and he is yours, and all he has and is. The sight will change you into his image, As the sun shining puts his glory

upon every object: so does Jesus. O cease then from man—look not at blind man, dark and benighted, look not at this heavy thick earth, nor at any of its glittering toys; they shine only, as shined upon. Cease from them all, and look to Jesus. The good Spirit direct and fix your eyes and mine upon him, till we see heaven in his face.

The same voice, still pursuing me, I perceived that I was not only to cease from looking to man, and all human things, but also to cease from depending on them—I was not to *live* upon them. I could, as it were, hear a voice, *Live not upon us, but live upon the Prince of Life.* He is a never failing fountain of life—He speaks, and the dead live—His voice makes and keeps alive. We live by him, and live on him, and in him. All other persons and things, but him, concern only the perishing, dying life of the body—but the life, which he gives, is his own spiritual, divine, eternal life. I cannot wish you a greater blessing, than to hear with power, and to find what I did in my journey—*Cease ye from living upon man, and live upon me.* So we do Lord Christ, the life which we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God.

From hence I was led to see the necessity of ceasing to hope for happiness from all these things

about us. They have it not to give. It grows not out of that earth, which layeth in wickedness, nor can it be increased by any good under the sun: because it is one of the perfect gifts, which cometh down from the Father of Lights. And when it is given by his grace, and received by faith, then this true philosopher's stone turns all things into gold. Faith living upon Jesus, can turn those things into happiness, which in their own nature could produce nothing but misery. Wonderful transmutation! It changes darkness into light, death into life, weakness into strength, sin into righteousness, mourning into joy, hell into heaven. By this faith we have Christ in us, the hope of glory. Christ dwelling in the heart; and where he is, there all he has is. *All* things are ours—salvation from all evil, a title to the love of God, and to the glory of God, and a fitness also and meetness for the eternal enjoyment of God in his love and glory. Cease ye from man then, and all is yours. O may you and I learn to cease from all schemes of happiness, in any object, but in Jesus. The more we live to him, the more dead he will make us to every thing else. He will let you love your relations, nay, he commands you to love them; but then you must take them

from him, as his bounty, and use them as his gifts, dependent on his sovereign will, free to give, free to take away, when and what he pleases. When your will can be made thus really resigned to his will, then he will make you happy, and you will feel something of their blessed oneness with him, who have no will but his, and therefore follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. I mark what you say upon that point. A resigned will is not where there is no rising of the flesh against God's will, but where there is victory over the will of the flesh, Pray take notice of this. And try, whether you have not this evidence of your adoption, that you desire the Father's will, and not yours may be done.

I am labouring at Brighthelmstone among a sweet people, with whom I am exceedingly happy. The work of dear Jesus prospers among us. His person grows more beloved. His work more precious. Fellowship with him more close and intimate, and therefore more happy. Our hearts warmed with his love, are warm with brotherly love, stirring up one another to press forward for the prize of our high calling, that is, to win Christ, and to be found in him, at the hour of death, and at the day of judgment. May the

same Lord Christ grow dearer to you and yours every day.

I am always bound to pray for your welfare, being by many ties yours,

W. R.

LETTER XVII.

ALL spiritual blessings be on my dear friend f whatever the tender heart, or the almighty arm of the loving Jesus has to bestow, may it be all yours! You made me promise to inform you of my motions, which I now fulfil.

God willing, I shall be next Sunday at Mr. C——'s; on Monday morning in Y——; From thence I shall make the best of my way to T——, and if I hear nothing of you there, I shall proceed to A——. My time is short, so that I can but just stay to take my leave of my friends. What a life is this! hurry, hurry, hurry, from place to place, from this object to that;—weary with seeking, but never finding rest.—Happy christian who

is fixed to a point!—Go where he will, ONE object is his ALL. The crucified Saviour is his happiness; his perfect, everlasting happiness; and this Heaven he carries about with him. No time, no place, no circumstances, make any change. He has one Lord, one faith, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. Come pain, sickness, poverty, death, the Saviour's love and power bear him up. Come temptations of all kinds, I will be with thee in the hour of temptation, says the Lord God. Where he is, nothing need be feared, because nothing can hurt. Oh my friend, the true knowledge of Jesus Christ, is an infallible cure fore all the miseries which come into the world by sin. There is no evil of mind or body, temporal or eternal, but our precious dear Lord is by office engaged to remove it. And shall not you and I value and love him? What can we set our hearts upon; what can bid so high for them, as this adorable Saviour? may he enable us to give them to Him, and then he will sanctify all their inferior loves; will let us love them, as flowing from his grace; so that this love will make us love him more. This love is Heaven. All joy and glory is in it. And as for the happiness of his redeemed people, we shall never know how great it is till

we join the church above. It will be a glorious meeting. Jesus bless you! Amen! Amen. I am for his sake, your faithful friend,

W. R.

LETTER XVIII.

November 25, 1765.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE much to tell you—of that ever dear and precious Lover—your best friend and mine. I had a token of his goodness in your last, for which I thank Lady M—t, but above all, her Lord and mine. I have a tale to relate of his free and kind heart, which will last longer than this world. It is really heaven to be relating it—and I cannot hold my tongue. He makes himself so lovely, by continual favours, that my heart is quite won; and, by his sweet constraint, is *now* fixed upon him. I would turn to other LOVERS, but sweet

Jesus will not let me. O, the boundless grace of his most amiable breast! Finite nature cannot tell, (how should it?) his infinite love. But as we get emptied of SELF, we know and experience more of his love. This I wish you, and my very dear Miss —, growth in grace, that is self-abasement, and growth in the knowledge of God our Saviour—may he empty you of SELF, and fill you with more of his good things. - We have very much of his presence and glory in our assemblies this winter, more than ever. His work revives amongst us: and cold and frosty as the weather is, our hearts burn within us. Last night St. Dunstan's was a very Bethel; it was like the dedication of the Temple, when the glory of Jehovah came down and filled the house. I was preaching on these words—*My meditation of him shall be sweet.*— And so it was indeed. When I was setting forth his undertakings, his suitableness to fulfil them, as God-man—his actual fulfilling of them, his power to apply and to make them effectual, how he does this by his word preached, in the hand of the Spirit made the means of working faith in the heart, and of producing the fruits of faith in fellowship with Jesus and his fulness, by which Jesus grows sweeter and sweeter, and so brings us to the end of our meditation; the sweet-

est of all, even of divine sweets, the enjoyment of Jesus in his kingdom of glory. O! what a seal did he set to this preached gospel. He made it the power of God. The meditation of his goodness yesterday, has still a relish and delightful savor! to-day it is sweet, very, very sweet indeed. Pray, mind, I do not make this my salvation—No, but these sweet streams lead me to the fountain—I do not rest in them, but if these be so sweet, what must the fountain be? If little faith finds Jesus so precious, what must precious Jesus be, when faith yields to sight and sense? My dear, dear friend, prize this pearl; it is inestimable. Two things I would beg your notice of. I know you have received him. The

First is, press for more knowledge—read, pray, hear, to be made more teachable and humble, that Jesus may have the glory of such discoveries as he makes of his person and of his work. And do not stop; press on, as long as you live; sit very low, very low, at Christ's feet, to hear his words. The

Second is, make use of his fulness, you are welcome, you cannot use it too much. Hence comes sweet fellowship, and by it all things will do you good. Carry them to that best friend, pour them into his loving bosom. He delights in familiarity.

You have been ill, that is the best for you; live by faith, and Jesus will make it plain to you.
Yours, in that incomparable Lover,

W. R.

LETTER XIX.

LAMBETH, Jan. 16, 1766.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE several reasons for writing to you at this time. The first is, that ever so long ago I wrote you an huge scribble. To which having received no answer, I thought it was high time I should get a little out of your debt, and pay off some of my old score with these scraps of paper. I hope you will take them according to the American phrase, for *paper currency*. But every letter to account, and having rated them just what you please, make me creditor for it.

My second reason for writing is, to enquire af-

ter you. How can I help being concerned for those whom I love, especially in the Lord? Such friends I have at ——. It would be a real pleasure to me, and a profit to yourself; if I knew what to ask for you, when I go to Court. How is your bodily health? I know you are generally weak and low, and I know it is good for you, yea the best of all for you. The physician, who never mistook a case, prescribes to a tender constitution. His prescription is perfect love. He could not bring about his gracious designs any other way: he wants to wean you from a life of sense, therefore, in infinite mercy he takes away sensible enjoyments. He would have you to go on from faith to faith; but how could faith grow so fast, as by keeping you from those things which are its very bane and destruction. He is bringing you to more fellowship with him, than you have had, therefore, you must have less fellowship with the world. Fewer outward comforts will certainly make you experience more spiritual comforts. This is our Physician's fixed practice—he never varies from it, not in one instance; mind, one of his favourite patients, **THY ROD, AND THY STAFF COMFORT ME:** the afflicting rod could not comfort, pain could not be pleasure, no chastening can be, in itself, joyous: but the staff, the

being supported under the rod, and the feeling of that support; he found faith and patience bear him up under the rod, which brought him to such close communion with his gracious Saviour, that he was comforted under the cross. This is also the experience of one highly favoured, as you may read, Rom. v. 3, 4, 5. Let me know then, how your soul prospereth under Jesus's care.

I have also a third reason for writing, which is to wish you a happy new year, the happiest of all you ever saw, and therefore I wish you more, still more enjoyment of our infinitely rich, everlasting precious Jesus. You will live to a blessed purpose, if every day of this new year, you get more out of SELF, and live more *in* and *on* Jesus. We have had a most remarkable time this Christmas of his grace and love. I have scarce an acquaintance, who has not been favoured with blessed visits from him. O, how great is his goodness! how great is his beauty! Incomparable both! May your dear heart, my friend, feel what I did at the Lock on innocent's day, when I was preaching on these words of Ps. lxxxvii. *All my springs are in thee.* I gave them first a translation of the psalm, then a paraphrase, then application; substance of the two first I send you, the psalm literally rendered runs thus. Title is,

"For the sons of miserable man, a psalm to be sung."

Ver. 1. He is to be established in the mountains of his holy one.—Mind, how sweetly the holy Spirit begins: he mentions not who this He that was to be established is, for all who are under his teaching know.

2. Jehovah loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob:

3. Weighty things are spoken of thee, thou city of Alehim. Selah attend to this.—What this love in v. 2 was for, what these weighty things in v. 3 were, the next words shew, where God the Father is introduced speaking.

4. I will cause it be remembered by them who know me in Rahab and Babylon, behold Philistia, and Tyre, the people of Ethiopia—**HERE WAS THE NAME BORN**—born in Zion, to be the Saviour of Rahab, and Babylon, Philistia, and Tyre, and Ethiopia, even as many as the Lord our God shall call in these countries.

David speaking by the holy Ghost, adds in verse

5. And of Zion it shall be said, a person and a person (God and man) shall be born in her, and he himself the most high shall perfectly establish her. (Namely the church founded upon the in-

carnate God, against which he says himself, the gates of hell shall not prevail.)

6. Jehovah shall record it, when he is describing the people, THAT HERE WAS THE NAME BORN; that divine name in which alone their is salvation, and from which all true joy, both in heaven and earth, ariseth, as the saints sung in the Old Testament, as the angels sung at his birth, and as the redeemed of the Lord will sing for ever.

7. And the singers, as well as the players on instruments shall say, ALL MY SPRINGS ARE IN THEE. (ALL, all the springs of grace, of glory, all arise from Jehovah manifest in the flesh.) O that such a spring as we had at the opening of these words may flow into and refresh your heart quite through the wilderness; till you come to the fountain-head, may you still drink of the water which flows through the rock Christ, till you drink of that, which flows from the throne of the Lamb. And so it will be: the Rock will follow you, and you will have the comfort of it, if you keep in mind that little word IN, all my springs are IN thee, not only from thee, through thee, (which is true) but IN thee. If faith fix here, all will be well. For if at any time the stream fail, then you may go up to the fountain-head, making up your happiness in Jesus, get you whatever it be, little or

much, in present comfort out of his fulness. Yet still he, and all he is and has, is yours.

My paper grows short, and my fingers are so cold, I can scarcely write; yet I have a fourth reason for writing—upon Mr. Alexander Cole's death. I wrote to Newcastle for his papers, especially for a book in manuscript, after the manner of the Pilgrim's Progress. My brother sent me word, his daughter at ——— had been over, and carried away all her father's papers. I wish you could get this book and read it, and send me your opinion of it. ——— perhaps could help you, to whom my kind love.

One thing more, and I have done. Yesterday I dined with Mr. Berridge. He was making great complaint of his debts, contracted by his keeping, out of his own living, two preachers and their horses, and several local preachers, and for the rents of several barns in which they preach. He sees it was wrong to run in debt, and will be more careful. But it is done. My application is to ———. Will you stand my friend with her, and tell her Berridge's case. If she please to assist him, I should be glad to convey her charity to him. You will be the judge, whether this be proper or not to mention to her. I beg my kind love to her. Nothing is yet done at Blackfriars:

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but Jesus does all things well; he times all things for the best; I am sure of it; therefore, I wait my Lord's time, and blessed waiting it is. May he bless you and yours in body and soul, and that for ever and ever: so prays

W. R.

LETTER XX.

LAMBETH, Feb. 4, 1766.

ALL the blessings of Jesus's love be with dear ——. I was not in a hurry to answer your letter, because Mr. Berridge promised to make his acknowledgments to ———; and because the time was at hand, when my Lord Chancellor declared he would end the affair of Blackfriars. You have heard of the event. My friends are rejoicing all around me, and wishing me that joy which I cannot take. It is my Master's will, and I submit. He knows what is best, both for his own glory, and his peoples' good. And I am cer-

tain he makes no mistake in either of these points. But my head hangs down upon the occasion, through the awful apprehensions, which I ever had of the cure of souls. I am frightened to think of watching over two or three thousand, when it is work enough to watch over one. The plague of my own heart almost wearies me to death; what can I do with such a vast number? Besides, I had promised myself a little rest and retirement, in the evening of life, and had already sat down with a SOUL, TAKE THINE EASE. And, lo! my fine plan is broken all to pieces. I am called into a public station, and to the sharpest engagement, just as I had got into winter quarters—an engagement too for life. I can see nothing before me, so long as the breath is in my body, but war—and that with unreasonable men—a divided parish, an angry clergy, a wicked Sodom, and a wicked world; all to be resisted and overcome: Besides all these, a sworn enemy; subtle and cruel, with whom I can make no peace, no, not a moment's truce, night and day, with all his children, and his host, is aiming at my destruction. When I take counsel of the flesh, I begin to faint. But when I go to the sanctuary, I see my cause good, and my Master is Almighty—a tried friend, and then he makes my courage revive. Although I

am no way fit for the work, yet he called me to it, and on him I depend for strength to do it, and for success to crown it. I utterly despare of doing any thing as of myself, and, therefore, the more I have to do, I shall be forced to live more by faith upon him. In this view I hope to get a great income by my LIVING. I shall want my Jesus more, and shall get closer to him. As he has made my application to him more necessary, and more constant, he has given me stronger tokens of his love. Methinks I can hear his sweet voice,—“Come closer, come closer, soul! nearer yet; I will bring you into circumstances, that you cannot do one moment without me.” O that you could always hear that voice, it would be your heaven! And indeed it is his language—nothing but love is on his tongue; but the noise of the flesh sometimes drowns his small still voice. —Comfort would flow into your heart, like a river, if the ears of faith were but open to attend to the endearments of Jesus, “Soul, thou shalt not live at a distance from me; I bought thee with a great price, thou art mine. When I afflict, it is to bring thee nearer to myself; to make thee glad in me; to bring thy heart to me. Thou shalt not make up thy comforts in the streams; come, come up nearer, nearer still

“to the fountain-head. To make thee, to force thee to live happy in my fulness, I will dry up the streams, and so will I teach thee to make me ALL in ALL.” The infinitely lovely Lamb of God teach you this lesson! All his word preaches it, all his providences proclaim it. Every cross says—Go to Jesus, live near his bleeding heart, or else I shall break the back of your patience. Every difficulty says, Go to Jesus, and he will make you strong in the power of his might to overcome. The world, and all the things in it, say, and the believer has ears to hear, Go to Jesus, there is no good in us—it is all in him. Whatever comes, I go to Jesus with it, and all is well. His smiles are humbling, his rod is sanctifying, in all his dealings he is good, and doeth good.

I know these things as well in theory, as I see the words upon the paper. But to practise them is indeed hard, except in his strength, to whom all things are possible; in it, and by it, all the things we meet with will not only bring us to live more *upon* Christ, but will also bring us to live more *to* Christ. By doing the one, we do the other. He that makes him all, shews forth most of his praise. What can glorify Christ, like that believer, who attempts nothing without consulting him, under-

takes no work or duty but in his strength, rejoices in nothing but in Jesus, and in his salvation. O that you may learn, my dear friend, thus to exalt King Jesus! I would have you to be ever bringing some honour to him, by making him your ALL indeed and in truth. Praise his fulness by living always upon it, and then he will make you always happy. Let him be all your salvation, and all your desire—all your salvation, as to the merit of it; all your desire, as to the efficacy of it; all your salvation in purchase; all your desire in enjoyment. So he is in heaven; O that we could make him so upon earth!

I have one favour to beg of you. Do not refuse me. You see my station—you hear my difficulties. Will you remember me *to him*, who called the things that be not, as though they were. He can send to war at his cost, and for his glory. If you love me, make mention of me when you go to Court. Pray for usefulness and for humility. I cease not to mention you.

I have received Lady B—'s money, and have been much in gaols of late. I am confined to church people; and when I see a prisoner, a dissenter, with a wife and several children, and cannot relieve him, it makes my very heart ach. So

I thought your gift was from heaven. I have made one family happy, and shall make others, and by and by will send you the particulars.

W. R.

LETTER XXI.

July 22, 1766.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I AM wishing for your prosperity in body and soul, but above all that your soul may prosper: and it is in the most thriving state, when you are lowest and vilest in your own eyes, and Jesus alone is eyed and esteemed. This is growth. As self is kept down, so Jesus is exalted. Oh, what views have I of this manner of growing in grace! Let me talk to you freely of it at our next meeting, as I have learned it not from books, but from God's word, and God's teaching.

I am learning, though dull, how to eye him in

all things: as it is my privilege, so I find it my happiness; but, alas! alas! I am a miserable learner. However, I set out afresh, and resolve not to give over aiming at my lesson. Do ever so well, I would do better; for I see in him worlds of beauty and glory, which will take up a long eternity to study, and, what is best of all, to *enjoy*. To my dear, dearest Jesus, I commend you and all yours. I am, very sincerely, yours, in our common Lord,

W. R.

LETTER XXII.

LAMBETH, Sept. 30, 1766.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE been carrying, here and there, the sweet savour of Jesus's dear name, ever since I left you. I was in Sussex for a month, and have heard, since my return, a better account of your

health, for which I am thankful. The Lord having appointed you for his heavenly kingdom, has also appointed all the steps which are to lead you thither. Every pain is in the covenant. Your confinement, your miscarriages, your faintings, your disappointments, not one thing that thwarts your will, but it is in God's will. Nothing can befall you, but what is ordered, contrived for you by wisdom, brought upon you by love. O for eyes to see, for a heart to receive, all God's dealings with you in this covenant view: How sweet would be your many trials, if you found them ALL appointed and managed for you by the best of friends. Learn to receive them thus.

I am going to Bath, and hope for a little leisure there to write to you a long letter. My subject is ready. After you receive it, I shall be glad to hear how your sentiments and mine agree. Pray remember me with many thanks to ——. I am in debt more than I can acknowledge. My best respects to her. Pray for a poor worm.

W. R.

LETTER XXIII.

LAMBETH, Nov. 15, 1766.

I AM indebted much to my dear friend, but among other things I owe you a note of hand, which I am now ready to pay. I wanted to talk with you at ——— upon the temper and disposition of a true believer; but being prevented there, I promised to send you my thoughts upon this subject, which I am the more ready to do, to-day, because the reason of my making the promise not only still subsists, but is also increasing. A temper, directly contrary to the Christian; is spreading among professors. I see the delusion grow, and I am a witness to the baneful effects of it. How many, have you and I heard of, who want to be something in themselves, and rather than not be so, will be beholden to Christ to set them up with a stock of grace? They would gladly receive a talent from him, that, by being faithful to grace given, and trading well with it, they may look, with delight, on their improvements, and thereby hope to get more grace and more glory.

This is the Popish plan, the Arminian, the Baxterian, the Westlean—very flattering to nature, exceedingly pleasing to self-righteousness, very exalting, yea, it is crowning **FREE WILL**, and debasing King Jesus. I would be more jealous than I am, over you in this matter, if I had not seen how the Lord teaches you, and warns you of this rock. Your frequent indispositions are his sweet lessons, by which he would bring you to the true gospel frame of spirit, which is this—It is the proper work of the grace of Jesus, to humble the proud sinner, to make him, and to keep him, sensible of his wants, convinced, always, that he has not any good of his own, and cannot possibly of himself obtain any, either in earth or heaven; but what he must be receiving, every moment, out of the fulness of Jesus.

The devil felt by pride, and he drew man into the same crime. He promised him independence, and he still persuades deceived man to set up for himself. That is the scheme of all unawakened men—they are resolved to be happy in spite of God. The Spirit of Jesus is sent to humble this proud sinner, which he does, by giving him a view of God's holy nature, and God's holy law. This makes sin, and consequently the sinner, hateful, discovers his guilt and his danger: if he at-

tempt to do any thing to make God love him, the holy Spirit humbles him for that very thing, by shewing him the sinfulness of his motive, and the imperfection of the action. Whatever he seeks to rest in, the Spirit of Jesus detects the false foundation, till he leaves him no resource, but to believe in the only begotten Son of God. So that when he comes to Jesus, he is stripped of all, quite naked and blind, moneyless and friendless, empty of good as the devil and sin could make him. This is all the fitness and preparation for Christ, which I know of. And when Christ is thus received, the same Spirit which would let him, the sinner, bring nothing to Christ, will now make him bring all from Christ, and so keep him sensible of his wants. He will teach the believer more daily of his poverty, weakness, unworthiness, vileness, ignorance, &c. that he may be kept humble, without any good but what he is forced to fetch out of the fulness of Jesus. And when he would go any where else for comfort, to duties, frames, gifts, and graces—(for pride will live, and thrive too, upon any thing, but Jesus)—His Spirit makes them dry and lean, and wont let him stop short of the fountain-head of all true comfort. In short, he will glorify nothing but Jesus. He will stain the pride of all greatness,

and of all goodness, excepting what is derived from the fulness of the incarnate God.

I know one who learned this very slowly, but has had much pains taken with him; and, to make what I have been saying more plain, I would illustrate it by his experience. He was a very, very vain, proud young man; knew almost every thing but himself, and, therefore, was mighty fond of himself. He met with many disappointments to his pride, which only made him prouder, till the Lord was pleased to let him see and feel the plague of his own heart. At this time my acquaintance with him began. He tried every method, that can be tried, to get peace, but found none. In his despair of all things else, he betook himself to Jesus, and was most kindly received. He trusted the word of promise, and experienced the sweetness in the promise. After this he went through various frames and trials of faith, too many to mention, and he is now got, where may Mrs.—, your dear sister, get, and as far beyond as she can:—

First, he has been brought to a clear conviction, that, *all fulness of good is in Jesus*, as clear, as that all the sap in the branch is from the stock on which it grows, as that all the nourishment in the member is from the body. What has the branch

or the member, except what they receive? Now this continual receiving from Jesus, every thing, saying, "You must go to him, you must go to him," is a most humbling lesson. And my friend says, it is nothing but this which crucifies his pride. He has been attempting, for many years, to ~~be~~ something, to do something of himself, but could not succeed: disappointed again and again, yet he would not give it up, till God made him feel in him, that is, in his flesh, dwelled *no good thing*; and now he writes folly, weakness, sin, on all that is his own; not only clearly convinced, that all fulness of good is in Jesus, but is also, in the second place, *content* it should be in him. It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell. It pleases the holy Spirit to testify of his fulness, and to glorify nothing but it: and by his teaching it, pleases the believer. He is made quite satisfied, that all fulness should dwell in that dear God-man: Content to have nothing but what he must go to him for: yea, happy to go to Jesus for those very things, of which he himself is empty, and which he cannot have any where else. My friend's heart glows, and his very countenance brightens up, and one catches fire at his words, when he is talking upon this subject. "O, says he, that you did but know what I experience in living upon the ful-

"ness of Jesus—God's will and mine are one in
"this matter—his subjection to his will is *heaven*
"*regained*; so I find it. I rest perfectly on the
"fulness, and I enjoy most sweetly, what God has
"laid up in it for my use. My conscience has a
"peace that passeth all understanding, through
"faith in the blood of the Lamb. I see myself in
"him perfectly accepted, perfectly justified, per-
"fectly comely in his comeliness, perfectly happy
"in his love—all the desires of the soul satisfied
"with Jesus's person, and Jesus's work. This,
"this is the death of pride. Here free-will, self-
"righteousness, a legal spirit cannot work. The
"spirit and power of Jesus, in this his glory, make
"them hide their heads."

This is living like a Christian. It is a life, in
one respect only, below an angels; and yet, great
and blessed as it is, I have heard my friend talk,
in a very uncommon strain, upon a state even be-
yond this, which he calls *heaven enjoyed*; and
that is

Thirdly, he is *thankful*—that all fulness dwells
in Jesus—not only is convinced of it, and content
with it, but also blesses God for its being in Jesus.
This is all they do in the highest heaven, and he
has most of heaven, who does this most like them.
My friend describes his meaning thus: I live out

"of myself—I have nothing, I am nothing, but
 "folly and sin—Jesus is my life, in him is the ful-
 "ness of its being, and of its comforts: whatever
 "I want, I find it in him. I experience, day by
 "day, the kindness of his heart, and the bounty of
 "his hand. Blessings on him, my heart enjoys,
 "what no tongue can describe. Whatever I go
 "to him for, he always sends me away with mat-
 "ter of thankfulness. Constant fellowship with
 "him, endears to me his person more and more.
 "Communion with him, in his offices, makes him
 "infinitely lovely. Partaking of his overflowing
 "love, makes it everlastingly precious. And liv-
 "ing upon the fulness of these, is the fulness of
 "joy. Glory, glory be to God-Jesus for ever and
 "ever: Heaven and Earth say with my heart,
 "Amen."

Thus does my friend illustrate the definition
 which I give you of the true gospel-frame of spi-
 rit. I hope we shall live to talk of it, and live to
 enjoy it more. Nothing else is worth living for.
 All means of grace are only useful, as they help
 us to live thus. All providences, sicknesses, losses,
 successes are only so far blessings, as they lead us
 more out of ourselves into the fulness of Jesus.
 My dear Mrs. —, I can write to-day upon no-
 thing else. I hope I write seasonably. When

you open this letter, you will want this lesson. I am sure you will, and God bless it to you; I follow it with my prayers, and I can do no more: but our common Lord will hear, I know he will; and will accompany my poor words with his presence. To the care of his dear, loving heart, I commend you and yours. Wonder not I have not written before; I have been in a more preaching way this summer, than I ever was in my life, and travelled much more, and have had with me a sweet savour of Jesus's dear name. O he is precious to my soul, how much, even now, I shall want time in eternity to tell. So precious that I think I have not long to be here, or else the matchless lover will make this earth a very heaven. But I say, I, the vilest worm that ever crawled or escaped hell, not to set me up, but *him*, the highly exalted, worthy Saviour. Again to him I commend you. Yours truly in him.

W. R.

LETTER XXIV.

LAMBETH, Jan. 24, 1767.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE waited till I am quite wearied out. Many a look and prayer have I sent ———ward, but all in vain. No tidings could I get, till Mr. ———, told me of your state. And, on his information, I am encouraged to enquire after you and yours, and after a very long letter, which I wrote upon my coming home from Bath. Pray give me some account, for indeed I long to know about these matters. The letter was upon a subject that I scarcely ever mentioned, before, to any body. it was *my own* experience. And I would not have it lost for a great deal. I have been trying it by scripture, and I could give you infallible proofs of its being agreeable to the word of God. And perhaps may, when I hear from you next. It will be some satisfaction to me, (as I never take copies of any thing,) to read my own history at ——. Before that time I may have

got a little lower, and have drunk deeper into the knowledge of Jesus. That seems to be the end of living, to have self abased, and Jesus exalted, and these two are inseparable. As self sinks in esteem, Jesus rises. When self is nothing but sin, then Jesus is a glorified Saviour. When self is nothing but misery, then Jesus is all heaven. I have been led to take particular notice of this, lately, from these views:

First, the person of Jesus; he was Jehovah. All the glory of the Godhead was in the man Jesus. And what was his appearance? mean, to the last degree. A worn, and no man; the very scorn of men, and the outcast of the people. What was his form? a servant, a poor servant. What were his tempers? meek and lowly, yea, meekness and lowliness itself: a perfect original, of whom all his disciples may learn to be meek and lowly. His way to glory was humility, so is ours. His glory indeed was his humility, so is ours. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, was true of the head, as well as of the members; O that you and I may be in this conformed to him! because herein:

Secondly, our fellowship with him consists. Whatever a man sees in himself, great or good, is an absolute hinderance to the enjoyment of Je-

sus. Whatever he sees vile and wicked; therein (if he have faith,) he will enjoy the Saviour. The more he sees, the more enjoyment: for that which humbles the sinner, brings him nearer to the Saviour. The humblest sinner is capable of the closest communion, and is thereby fitted for the largest communications of Jesus's love. The emptiest hold the most, and the emptiest receive the most. O for daily emptying.. This self, this full self; what reasonings, what legality, what self-righteousness has it, and all to keep us from being filled with the fulness of Christ; this is your grand enemy, that idol SELF. The Lord crucify it by his own Almighty grace! and to induce you to apply to him for this power, I would recommend it to you.

Thirdly, in reading the bible, take notice of the persons to whom the promises are made. Their character is always one, and the same! the poor in spirit; the contrite and broken in heart; the hungry, the thirsty, the meek and lowly. Take this general promise as an instance: *God giveth grace to the humble*, and with grace he gives all things. See how I get writing on, without intending it; I only sat down to enquire about you, and all our dear friends: Miss — at the head of them. Lo here is a long scroll started

up. In love remember me to all friends, and, if you please, with my hearty prayers for their welfare at ~~_____~~. My eyes have tears for them. Dear Jesus reveal himself so to you, in his glory, as to eclipse all created good, and *yourself* especially. So prays a poor sinner.

W. R.

LETTER XXV.

March 21, 1767.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I WOULD not have let your long and kind epistle be so carelessly passed by, but that I am, at present, left to myself without a curate. All my time is taken up with parish duty, a great deal of it very unprofitably spent. But I am called to it, and I must, and do submit. I have sat down, and I will write on, till I am interrupted. And I begin with telling you how your last refreshed me.

It was a seasonable feast; for I was in a sad taking about the account which I had sent you of myself, having never found any freedom to do it to any body living, before; and I feared either it should be lost, or fall into any other person's hand. I am glad it is in yours. Now you know whereabouts I am, and what my present state is, it may be of some use to you to be informed, how I was brought unto it. God's dealings with me have been wonderful, not only for the royal sovereignty of his richest grace, but also for the manner of his teaching, on which I cannot look back without adoring my meek and lowly prophet. He would have all the honour (and he well deserves it) of working out, and also of applying his glorious salvation. When I was in trouble and soul-concern, he would not let me learn of man. I went every where to hear, but no body was suffered to speak to my case. The reason of this, I could not tell then, but I know it now. The Arminian methodists flocked about me, and courted my acquaintance, which became a great snare unto me. By their means, I was brought into a difficulty, which distressed me several years. "I was made to believe that part of my title to salvation was to be inherent—something called holiness in myself, which the grace of God was

“to help me to. And I was to get it by watch-
“fulness, prayer, fasting, hearing, reading, sa-
“craments, &c. so that after much and long at-
“tendance in those means, I might be able to look
“inward, and be pleased with my own improve-
“ment, finding I was grown in grace, a great
“deal holier, and more deserving of heaven than
“I had been.” I do not wonder now, that I re-
ceived this doctrine. It was sweet food to a
proud heart. I feasted on it, and to work I went.
It was hard labour, and sad bondage; but the
hopes of having something to glory in of my own,
kept up my spirits. I went on, day after day,
striving, agonizing (as they called it) but still I
found myself not a bit better. I thought this was
the fault, or that, which being amended, I should
certainly succeed; and, therefore, set out afresh,
but still came to the same place. No galley-slave
worked harder, or to less purpose. Sometimes I
was quite discouraged, and ready to give all up;
but the discovery of some supposed hinderance
set me to work again. Then I would redouble
my diligence, and exert all my strength. Still I
got no ground. This made me often wonder;
and still more, when I found at last, that I was
going backward. Methought I grew worse. I
saw more sin in myself, instead of more holiness,

which made my bondage very hard, and my heart very heavy. The thing I wanted, the more I pursued it, flew farther and farther from me. I had no notion, that this was divine teaching, and that God was delivering me from my mistake in this way: so that the discoveries of my growing worse were dreadful arguments against myself, until now and then a little light would break in and shew me something of the glory of Jesus, but it was a glimpse only—gone in a moment. As I saw more of my heart, and began to feel more of my corrupt nature, I got clearer views of gospel-grace, and in proportion as I came to know myself, I advanced in the knowledge of Christ Jesus. But this was very slow work; the old leaven of self-righteousness, new christened *holiness*, stuck close to me still, and made me a very dull scholar in the school of Christ. But I kept on, making a little progress, and as I was forced to give up one thing, and another, on which I had some dependance, I was left at last, stripped of all, and neither had, nor could see where I could have ought to rest my hopes; that I could call my own. This made way for blessed views of Jesus. Being now led to very deep discoveries of my own legal heart, of the dishonour which I had put upon the Saviour, of the despite I had done to the

spirit of his grace, by resisting and perverting the workings of his love; these things humbled me. I became very vile in my own eyes. I gave over striving; the pride of free-will, the boast of my own works, were laid low. And as SELF was debased, the scriptures became an open book, and every page presented the Saviour in new glory. Then were explained to me these truths, which are now the very joy and life of my soul. Such as

First—the plan of salvation, contrived by the wisdom of Jehovah Alehim, fulfilled in the divine person and work of Jesus, and applied by the Spirit of Jesus. The whole was so ordered, from first to last, that all the glory of it might be secured to the persons in Jehovah. The devil fell by pride, he tempted and seduced man into pride: therefore the Lord, to hide pride from man, has so contrived his salvation, that he who glorieth should have nothing to glory in but the Lord.

Secondly—The benefits of salvation are all, the free gifts of free grace, conferrèd without any regard to what the receiver of them is; nothing being looked at by the Giver, but his own sovereign glory. Therefore the receivers are the ungodly, the worst of them, the unworthy, the chief of sinners; such as are saved freely by *grace* through faith, and that not of themselves, it (name-

ly, salvation by faith) is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

Thirdly—When I considered these benefits one, by one, it was the very death of self-righteousness and self-complacency; for when I looked at the empty hand, which faith puts forth to receive them, whence was the hand emptied—whence came faith—whence the power to put forth the empty hand—and whence the benefits received upon putting it forth? All is of God; he humbles us, that we may be willing to receive Christ; he keeps us humble, that we may be willing to live by faith upon Christ received, and as it is a great benefit to have this faith; so it is,

Fourthly—a great, inestimably great benefit to live by faith: for this is a life, in every act of it, dependent upon another. Self is renounced, so far as Christ is lived upon. And faith is the most emptying, pulling down grace; most emptying, because it says, and proves it too. *In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing*, and therefore it will not let a man see aught good in himself, but pulls down every high thought, and lays it low in subjection to Jesus. It is called the *faith of the Son of God*, because he is the author and the finisher of it; he gives it; he gives to live by it; he gives the benefits received by it; he gives

the glory laid up for it ; so that if I live to God, and, in any act, have living communion with God, it is by nothing in myself, but wholly by the faith of the Son of God. When I wanted to do any thing commanded (what they call duties) I found,

Fifthly—a continual matter of humiliation. I was forced to be dependent for the will and for the power, and, having done my best, I could not present it to God, but upon the golden altar, that sanctifieth the gifts ; not the worthiness, nor the goodness of the gifts, but the sanctifying grace of the great high priest alone, can make them holy and acceptable. How low did this lay the pride of good works ? since, after all, they were viler than dung, unless perfumed with the sweet incense of Jesus's blood and righteousness. Here I learned to eye him, in all my works and duties, the alpha and omega of them ; the life and spirit of all my prayers, and sermons, and hearing, and reading, and ordinances ; are all dead works, unless done in, and by the faith of the Son of God. Against this blessed truth, of which I am as certain as that I am alive, I find my nature kick. To this hour a legal heart will be creeping into duties, to get between me and my dear Jesus, whom I go to meet in them. But he soon recovers me from the temptation, makes

me loath myself for it, and gets fresh glory to his sovereign grace; and as all the great and good things, ever done in the world, were done by faith, so all the crosses, ever endured with patience, were from the same cause, which is

Sixthly—another humbling lesson. I find, to this moment, so much unbelief and impatience in myself, that if God was to leave me to be tried with any thing that crossed my will, if it was but a feather, it would break my back. Nothing tends to keep me vile in my own eyes, like this fretting and murmuring, and heart-burning, when the will of God, in the least, thwarts my will. I read, *the trial of your faith worketh patience*, the trial of mine, is the direct contrary. Instead of patient submission, I want to have my own way, to take very little physic, and that very sweet: so the flesh lusteth. But the physician knows better, he knows when, and what to prescribe; may every potion purge out this impatient, proud, unbelieving temper, so that faith may render healthful to the soul, what is painful to the flesh. And as no cross can be endured without the faith of the Son of God, so

Seventhly and lastly—there is no comfortable view of leaving the world, but by the same faith. *These all*, who had obtained a good report in ev-

ery age, *died in faith*. On their death-bed, they did not look for present peace and future glory, but to the Lamb of God. Their great works, their eminent services, their various sufferings, all were cast behind their backs, and they died as they lived, looking at nothing but Jesus. He was their antidote against the fear, and against the power of death. They feared not the cold death-sweat; Jesus's bloody sweat was their dependance. The dart lost its force on Jesus's side. The sting was lost in his corpse. Death stung itself to death, when it killed him. There is life, life in its highest exaltation and glory, in not breathing the air of this world. This life, through death, Jesus entered on, and we enter on it now by faith; and, when our breath is stopped, we have this life, as he has it, pure spiritual and divine. Because he lives it, we shall live it also. Yes, my dear friend, we, you and I, after we have lived a little longer, to empty us more, to bring us more out of ourselves, that we may be humbled, and Jesus exalted more, we shall fall asleep in Jesus, not die, but sleep; not see, not taste death, so he promises us; but in, his dear arms, sweetly go to rest in our weary bodies, when our souls shall be with the Lord. And then we shall be perfect in that lesson, which we learn so very slowly in this present

world; namely, that from him, and of him, and to him, are all things; to whom be all the glory for ever and ever, Amen.

These are the things, which God himself has taught me. Man had no hand at all in it. No person in the world, not I myself: for I fought against them as long as I could: so that my present possession of them, with all the rich blessings which they contain, is from my heavenly teacher alone. And I have not learned them, as we do mathematics, to keep them in memory, and to make use of them when I please; no, I find in me to this moment, an opposition to every gospel-truth, both to the belief of it in my head, and to the comfort of it in my heart. I am still a poor dependant creature, sitting very low at the feet of my dear teacher, and learning to admire that love of his, which brought me down and keeps me down at his feet. There is my seat, till I learn my lesson perfectly. That will soon be. There is nothing in his presence, but what is like himself. In heaven all is perfection. The saints are as humble, as they are happy. Clothed with glory and clothed with humility--with one heart and one voice, they cry, WORTHY IS THE LAMB. They look not at, they praise not, one another; but the Lamb is glorified in his saints, and will have from them never

ending praise and glory, for the glory which his sovereign grace has bestowed upon them. In a measure I now feel what they do. My heart is in tune, and I can join that blessed hymn—looking at him as the giver of grace (and grace is glory begun, *nota bene*,) as they look at him the giver of glory. I can take the crown, most gladly, from the head of all my graces, as they do from the head of their glory, and cast it down at his loving feet. **WORTHY IS THE LAMB.** He is—
he is—blessings on him for ever and ever.

Ought not I to say so, indebted as I am to that precious Lamb of God. You see how he has dealt with me—the kindness, the gentleness of his ways,—his royal bounty,—the magnificence of his love. Adore and praise him with me, and for me. And learn, my dear friend, from what I have here related, to trust him more. When he shews you your vile heart, your poor works; when dreadful corruptions stir, and are ready to break out; go to him, freely, boldly; stop not a moment to reason with your own proud spirit, but fall down at his footstool. Tell him just what you feel. He loves to hear our complaints, poured, with confidence, into his bosom. And never, never, on earth, will you get such fellowship with him, so close, so blessed, as when you converse

with him in this poverty of spirit. Let nothing keep you from him; whatever you meet with, let it drive you to him: for all good is from him, and all evil is turned into good by him. O wondrous Saviour! Here was I going on, and I hope in this theme, never to stop—But the Rev. Mr. — is come in—one just ordained. I do not leave Jesus to talk to him, but I am going to him to talk of sweet Jesus. To him I commend you and yours. Believe me very truly yours in that most lovely Lord Christ, most precious Jesus.

W. R.

LETTER XXVI.

LAMBETH, Sept. 27, 1767:

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE been waiting for good news, but in vain. I wanted some satisfactory answer to your last, and though I can give you none, yet I take

up my pen to make an apology for the great Lord, (who will not send you a minister) least you should begin to think hardly of him, and of me too, his poor servant. I would have you to remember, that the government is upon his shoulders—the government of heaven and earth. His church is the object of his special government. It is his *body*—bought with his blood—quickened by his Spirit—kept by his power—blessed with his love. All its concerns are upon his heart: his eyes are upon —, he sees his people there with perfect complacency; and they shall want nothing that he has to give. Among the rest, he beholds you and yours, and is managing all for your good. All shall be blessed to you, your relations, your house, your substance, your state of body, and of mind, your life and death, things temporal and spiritual. He will turn all things into blessings: for he does all things well. He does not, he cannot make one mistake in his government; no, not the least. He is wisdom, he is love, he is power itself. Infinite wisdom directs his love, and sets it to work; and, being Almighty, he makes all things work together for the best to his dear people. You are as dear to him at —, as we are at London. When he knows it to be right, he will send you a pastor after his own heart; and

when he does not want one there, you cannot get one. When it is right you should be comforted, you shall be humbled, and then your consolations shall abound: and when it is right you should be low and mourning, he will bring good, yea, joy out of heaviness. Think of all that his power can do, his love disposes, his covenant binds him, to do it for his people.

O! blessed Mrs. —! What a happy woman are you? Jesus is yours. All he is, all he has, (and mind he is Lord of all things) is yours. Who is like unto your Jesus? None, none, in heaven or earth: for your friend has all power in heaven and earth, and he will use it for your good, to keep you, to guide you, to give you what is best: what he knows to be best; and has, as such, appointed for you in his wise counsel, and purpose of grace. Leave yourself then to his care and management; yourself and yours. Trust him for a pastor. Faith is the best way to get one. Ask of him, believing, and Mr. —, or some one, you never heard of, shall be sent. Believe for your mercies, and you cannot want your mercies. If you take notice of God's dealings, you will find, *That God never takes away what you are enjoying by faith.* All things are possible, both to get and to keep, to him that believeth. And when belief

goes, all goes. And well it is so: for that, which is not enjoyed by faith, is not worth enjoying. It can bring no real good to us, and no glory to God; therefore we had better be without it. In this holy art of believing for our blessings, I wish you, most heartily, a great proficient. Faith alone makes the difference. I would have you daily to practice it for every earthly good thing you enjoy; then shall it produce a gladness of heart—but, without faith, it will not be to your true solid comfort, because not sanctified. You see how open I write; my very heart appears. For I know your weak side. There I fear for you; and my fear is a holy fear. I fear for God's glory, in the use of a comfort so near your very soul, and I know of no way but what I now tell you. *Believe for your mercies.* That will secure God's honour, and your comfort. To the sweet arms of your divine lover, I commend you and yours, that he would give you grace to trust all your earthly comforts daily in the Saviour's care. This I shall entreat for you, being very heartily yours in that loveliest of all loves.

W. R.

LETTER XXVII.

BLACK FRIARS, Oct. 27, 1769.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

FINDING the cover of this letter yesterday, it put me in mind of our past correspondence, and brought back into pleasing reflection many agreeable interviews with you and yours. I was resolved therefore to make use of this cover. Providence, I thought, had put it in my way. It is to be sent as directed, to be a witness for me of my constant attachment to you and your family, as well as of my uninterrupted affection. Go, letter, and say so. Assure them, that I am still the same in heart, in deed, wishing and praying to approve myself to be unfeignedly theirs. And tell them my reason; it is because, through grace, I am the same in heart, in deed, to my spiritual FRIEND; wishing and praying to approve myself to be unfeignedly his in all things. Upon better acquaintance I am become settled in my

Love, and rest in it. I have some little intimacy with the friend of sinners, and what he manifests to me of himself, increases affection. He teaches me to loath myself; every day he lets me see and feel the total ruin of this body of sin and death, and will not let me look at any thing in, or of myself, from whence I may draw one moment's comfort. Thus he makes himself more lovely. Self-loathing renders him precious. The more we get out of self, the more we grow into Jesus. Tired of our works and duties, we learn to value his righteousness. Feeling we cannot keep ourselves, we know how to trust his faithfulness, who hath undertaken to keep his people unto the end. O what a friend is this! whose love is like himself; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. This sense of his love makes his people loving. And his love to them is the bond of all their holy love to one another. Having put on Christ, they put on with him, kindness, brotherly love, bowels of mercies, &c. Some of these, but I do not boast, I feel to you and my dear friends with you. May our love be mutual, increasing continually in every sweet and holy affection. The love of Christ will constrain to this; it spreads like leaven. Every act, not only brings forth, but also diffuses its sweet influence. Whenever I remember you,

and make mention of you at our court, the king not only hears, but approves, and makes the love expressed to be love abounding. The holy flame spreads as it burns: so that every affection, as it increases in its attachment to our glorious head, makes us more truly loving to all his members.

My dear friend, I wish you were more intimate with this loving Jesus. And why not? What has he done to make you shy of him? All your complaints about yourself are no bar: they are so many ties and bonds, constraining you to love him; yea, he will love to hear them from you, as matters of faith. Whatever you are, or feel of sin, misery, helplessness, &c. if rightly managed, should increase your knowledge of, and dependence on, the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed all that you meet with, till you meet him face to face, should bring you into more experience of his perfect salvation, and of his free love to bestow it on such as you. By which means you would be growing daily in the excellency of the knowledge of *your* Lord, and would be more conformed to his image and example. May you and I increase daily in this heavenly friendship, and love him in our measure, as he loved us. I have just returned from a journey of seven hundred miles; ashamed and confounded at his mercies to

me, and mine; and yet, to pour my praises to his grace, so mean my services in his own work, that I am forced to cry for mercy, on my best sermons and labours. I am returned home self-abased, carrying this truth written on my heart, and desiring to manifest it in outward conversation. Let him that glorieth, glory only in the Lord-Jesus. I saw Lady H——, who was pure and well, and I preached at her chapel at Bath. She had not received satisfactory, or I think she said, no answer at all from Lord Chancellor; but he must give such an answer as our Lord Chancellor pleases. That is our comfort. My love to Mr. ——. I am going to pray for him. All covenant blessings be with you and yours. The Lord spare — for his mercies sake. I do not know what you would all do, if he who gave him, was to take him away; and remember he has a right to do it, when he will. Farewel, farewel. I am yours in our dear Lord and keeper.

W. R.

LETTER XXVIII.

May, 1768.

THANK you, my good friend, for remembering me. I began to have some hard thoughts of you, but they are gone; time has taught me, that old friends are better than new, and grace has improved this experience: for friends in Christ will be so for ever. We *may* part, but only to meet again. Love can reach from London to —; ay, a great way farther. I feel my heart just now united to —, and rejoice from my soul, that Jesus has taken her up to himself; thanks be to him for the grace she had, and the glory she had received, out of his fulness. Blessings on him, that we are going the same way, to meet our best friend, and all our friends; and to be with him our heaven-making Jesus, and to be with them, for evermore. I was led, from reading your letter, to a very comfortable view of the Prince of life. I thought I saw him in that character, exceeding amiable and glorious; and the more I considered it, the more lovely it grew to

the eye of faith. For it seemed to me, that sin and death came into the world with all their train of evils, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. *Wonderful* is his name, who can bring righteousness out of sin. What a miracle-working Jesus is he, who can make life out of death? Indeed all he does, is in this strange way, peculiar to himself, that his might be the crown of crowns. As a Jesus, he not only saves from the evil of sin and death; this is the least part of his matchless work; but he also, in the free gift of his sovereignty, bestows righteousness and life; and, to the everlasting praise of his sovereignty, bestows them on the most unrighteous; and on the most dead in sin. In this praise, how glorious is our Jesus. My heart is now captivated with his inimitable loveliness, although I see him through a glass darkly; what must he be in full and open view, when the display of his beauty will make an eternal heaven? I knew one, who was admitted as that happy soul was, Cant. ii. 9 to see the divine lover looking forth at the window, and shewing himself, or as it is in the margin, *flourishing*, opening and expanding like a flower, his beauties and fragrance through the lattice window. It was a ravishing sight. If the eye and senses of faith can be thus highly delight-

to my eyes, and precious to my heart. He is my life. I find it, enjoy it, in him, and let me speak, my dear friend, a word for him to you: *for him*, as I am in duty bound—*to you*, as love constrains me. For him, I speak a most complete, absolutely and eternally perfect Saviour. His person, his work possessed of all the glories of the Godhead. What he did and suffered, in order that he might save to the uttermost; admits of no addition. It was once done and perfected for ever. My friend, have you the benefit of this? Do you enjoy it in your conscience? and there read, and there maintain, a full and everlasting repeal from the sentence of death. This is the honour Jesus claims of you. And it is the highest you can pay him. You can do him no greater homage, nor more acceptable worship, than to put your entire dependence, without any, the least drawing back, or wavering, on his life and death, as your whole deliverance from sin and death, as your clear title to heaven and glory. When faith shews you the divine majesty of Mary's Son, and the everlasting honours of his obedience unto death, then will the peace of God rule in your heart, and thereby you will glorify the blood and the righteousness of the Redeemer, more than any angel, more than any happy spirit around his throne.

The enemy long—too long kept me from that enjoyment, by wiles and snares, chiefly legal views and self-righteous plans. Still, he now and then, gets an advantage of me. But I beg, my friend, you would beware of his devices. Are you resting upon Jesus? and do you find the sentence of death is no longer in force against you? Read, study your bible, pray and beg for an increase of faith. This is the use of all means. May the Lord the Spirit, bless them to you. Faith is your shield against the accuser of the brethren, and against your own legal workings. If you grow in this experience, you will grow more and more alive to God, you will believe, and find more of the love of a reconciled Father. The more you rest on the finished salvation, you will certainly abound more in the blessed fruits of it: such as seeing yourself perfectly saved, your hopes will all cast anchor within the veil, your affections will get fixed on their everlasting object, and you will come under the sweet government of king Jesus. Thus living *in* him, you will live *to* him, which is not only spiritual life, but is also indeed spiritual liveliness. And if you ever find this decay after you once had it, mind and attend to the cause of its decay, and you will see this was the only cause, namely, your faith was therefore not lively, be-

cause you were not resting perfectly upon Jesus, as your Saviour, from the sentence, of death. This was the worm, which eat into the gourd; and made it wither. Keep this out, it will flourish and grow, as long as you have any need of faith for protection, or for happiness. And when the time comes, that faith is to be no more.—What is dying? Is it not in the hand of Jesus? Does not he appoint it, fix it—send it? Has not he promised to be with you in the hour of death, to keep you from the fear and from the power of it? Is not he faithful, almighty, all-loving? his love wants no power to make his promises good to his dying friends. Yea, he does make them good every day. He will to you, doubt it not. I have written, till my time is up. You are sure my subject is not exhausted; no, never will be. But I am forced to stop. My dear friend, pray for me. You know my profession of love for your soul. God knows my heart. Adieu.

W. R.

LETTER XXIX.

June 11.

THANKS to my dear friend for her last. It was a great refreshment to me. O how does my spirit rejoice to see the blessed Jesus crowned and exalted in your soul, and no other name mentioned in your lips, no dependance upon any being or thing in your heart or life, but that God-man. This is the point. Here may we fix. But alas! although I would fix, and never so much as turn my eye from hence, yet I find so many enemies within and without, that it is hard keeping our hold, and never letting it go. In this warfare the flesh and the spirit fight without ceasing. The flesh against Christ's sufficiency, and the Spirit for him. But thanks be to his grace, the Spirit is almighty, and he has given the flesh in all believers a mortal wound, of which it will, ere long, bleed to death. And then, oh blessed prospect, we shall see the captain of our salvation, through whom we conquered, face to face. That is enough.

There is heaven. May you and I, till we get there, learn daily to make more use of Christ. Our dear fellow soldier, lady —, fights bravely. She went to Brighthelmstone this day se'nnight. I had a sweet letter from her this morning. She is happy in the adorable Immanuel, and lives to him, and for him. Her only view in Sussex is to carry his glad tiding to a wretched ignorant people. He has hitherto prospered her design, and while he smiles upon it, I believe she will not give it up.

God willing I shall leave London on the 20th of this month; but am not yet determined how I shall travel. In hopes of the pleasure of meeting you, I will trouble you with a line, as soon as I know whether I ride, or come in the coach, or in a post-chaise. My dear, ever dear Lord and Master keep you! To his sweet and tender heart, I commend you, and am for his precious name sake, your faithful friend and servant.

W. R.

LETTER XXX.

BLACK FRIARS, May 2, 1769.

I WROTE to my good friend at Christmas, and got an answer at Easter. Indeed I began to think you had dropped me: for I make myself sure of nothing, but of my dear Lord's unchangeable love. Yet I corrected myself for thinking so of you: but I was tempted, and I have combustible enough to feed any, yea, every temptation. The Lord keep me from others, as he did from this.

You ask my opinion of inoculation. People, who reason upon worldly motives, may do as they please. To others, I would relate the case of a great Doctor in divinity, and a great christian, who had an only son. His wife was for, the Doctor was against, inoculation. They had many disputes about it. The Doctor said he could not do it in faith—the wife said she could do it, because she believed it to be for the best. Neither side would yield: so they agreed to put it off, till

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the one or the other should give up their opinion, and both be of one mind. The child was thus left in God's hand—he got the small-pox in the natural way, and did well.

I attend to your complaints of yourself. They are true. You might make a thousand more, and alike true. But, my dear friend, what of all this? Is not Jesus the Saviour of such sinners as you are? Pray, take heed of getting into a complaining temper, and contracting a habit of it: for there is no greater enemy to Jesus, to the growth of your communion with him, and to the liveliness of your heart towards him. I would have you sensible of all your causes of complaint, but satisfied under them; and willing to be just what you are. In this poverty of spirit, needy, sinful, helpless, dependent temper, consists the very life of faith: for while you feel thus, every thing in you and about you says, "You must go to Jesus—you can do nothing without him—he must counsel, and strengthen, and comfort—he must save—he must be a Jesus to you every moment, and in every thing." What reply does the believer make?—"It is true—without him I can do nothing—I am helpless, and his strength is perfected in my utter weakness; most gladly, therefore, do I glory in my weakness, that the

"strength of Christ may rest upon me." O, for more of Paul's happy experience! He had no such gladness as that, which arose from communion with Jesus, and he gloried in that, which helped him to this communion, by making it absolutely necessary for him. He did not commit sin on purpose; but being a sinner, he did not wish not to be one, in himself; it was his joy, yea his crown, of rejoicing that God-Jesus, and sinful Paul were one. Here he found his heaven; Jesus was united to the sinner, as meat is to the hungry; and Paul lived upon him, feasted on him, enjoyed Jesus, as the hungry do their meat. It was such a feast, that Paul would not wish to have no appetite, but rather to have it enlarged, that he might live more upon the bread of God, and grow up more into Christ Jesus.

What! must I always be this poor needy sinner? Yes; always, till you get into heaven. And then you will be perfectly humbled; and have nothing within you to rob Jesus of any part of his glory. All your salvation, from the councils of eternity to the eternal fulfilment of them, will then be made plain; you will see, confess, and be happy in confessing, that sovereign grace did all for you, and in you. And in the perfect sense of this, you will triumph in being a SINNER SAVED, and in

this you will triumph as long as heaven is heaven: But thus you keep on complaining—"I find myself too often poring over my own inward sinfulness and misery, and consequently giving way to unbelief, whenever my poor reason tells me, I should be rejoicing in the God of my salvation." And what then! unbelief is in you, felt or not; and unbelief given way to, is your burden—this makes for you. And it only proves, that you are still at school, learning your second lesson; and that is, how the God of your salvation, being received, is to be enjoyed. You own he is received. You call him, the God of my salvation. Observe, my dear friend, now this Jesus is yours, ALL is yours. You have an undoubted right and title to Him, and to His—improve it then, and make use of his fulness. Your estate is clear and boundless, you have only to receive the income of it in grace, as well as in glory. I pray you, my dear friend, to study this lesson, and if the Lord, the Spirit help you to learn it, well; it will save you from many an aching heart. Observe, Jesus is yours, after this, you are not to seek for any new title to any part of salvation. This is also secured; but you are called upon to enjoy the purchased salvation, and to be a happy receiver out of the Saviour's fulness. Suppose

you live thus ever so well, receive ever so much, what you enjoy in Christ is no part of your title to Christ; what you receive from Christ is not your title to pardon, to righteousness, or to holiness. He is received for these purposes—He, Christ himself, and your enjoying him for these purposes, are not your title to pardon, &c. What Christ does for you, or in you, or by you, is not to be looked at, so as not to look still simply at Christ himself. What he is, and what he did for you, here, is all your salvation. What he does in you, or by you, here is the enjoyment of this salvation in its fruits and effects: But these fruits and effects do not make you holy;—oh, no, the poor beggars, who are fed at our king's table, will never say—we pay the king for our meat by eating a great deal; or, his meat feeds us, and therefore we make ourselves strong;—or, his grace nourishes us, and therefore we make ourselves holy. No, no they are taught better. They will always acknowledge—the more we receive out of the fulness of Jesus, we find ourselves more happy, and the fruits of our interest in him are more abundant to our comfort and to his glory, but our debt increases; and the better we are fed and clothed, and kept up with his royal bounty, he leaves us nothing to glory in, except his

overflowing grace. In this spirit his people hear, and read, and pray, and attend means and ordinances; they do not seek holiness in these—not to be made holy by them—but they do attend in faith, sanctified first by the faith that is in Jesus, and in that faith enjoying him in all they do. Christ is my sanctification, before I can do any thing aright, and what I do aright, does not make me holy, but shews that I am holy. Every living branch is ingrafted into the root and stock of holiness, and its leaves and fruit do not make it to be in the vine, but only prove, that it is in it. A member is not made living by doing its office. The eye does not live by seeing, but it is a living eye, and therefore sees. You must be a living member in the mystical body, before you can do your office in it. Doing your office, does not make you, but only shews that you are a living member. My dear friend, weigh these things well. I verily believe the holy Spirit is now teaching you this lesson: for I see you cannot be content with yourself, nor your graces—nor gifts—improve this divine teaching, and learn to build all your hopes of holiness on Christ made of God's sanctification for you. And the more clearly you believe this, you will love the God of your salvation more; your spiritual enemies will be more

subdued, and in heart and life you will be more devoted to God, to his ways and will. I give you this advice from my own knowledge. Give me credit, and try, and you will soon find cause to give God his glory.

I hope to look upon you, and say on this subject more than I can on paper. Remember me in love and respect. The good will of your unchangeable Friend be with you and yours, and me and mine.

Friend, your affectionate friend W. R.

LETTER XXXI.

BRIGHTHELMSTONE, July 20.

JESUS be yours, all he is, and all he has. Then you will be as rich as an arch-angel. I hope he will be my guide, and bring me to — on Friday next, between one and two. I am not

sure, because I have not taken a place in the stage, nor shall, till I go to London, which will be on Tuesday next. If I cannot come in the stage, perhaps I may see you before. We go on sweetly in this place. Christ is indeed exalted, and reigns glorious in many a heart, as I wish he may in yours. He does—but not as you could wish. May he captivate you more with his infinite beauty, and enable you to live more blessed upon his infinite fulness, that he may keep his royal court in your soul. The more you are acquainted with him, you will grow in love: for he is altogether lovely. An immense ocean of everlasting love. The whole world is but a drop of his love—what must heaven be? where his love is to be glorified and enjoyed for ever:—there we shall him. Oh for that day! But even by the way, as he walks with us, he makes our hearts burn within us. These sweet foretastes of his love draw us on, and whet an appetite. A few more of these, and we shall get to the fountain-head, and drink rivers of pleasure for evermore. To his precious dear heart's love I commend you and yours, and am, for his sake, your friend and servant.

W. R.

LETTER XXXII.

SWEET Jesus be with my dear friend! I promised you a note as soon as I was determined what way I should travel. It is now fixed for the — stage, in which, God willing, I shall reach — on Friday the 24th of this month, about 12 o'clock at noon, when I hope to see some faces from — to rejoice my heart, with whom to talk a little of our time away about that dear, dearest of all dears, the only one worth talking about. I know not of any good use the tongue is at present, but to be telling of his salvation from day to day, in the praise of which salvation it will be employed for ever and ever. May your heart and mine be ever warm with his love, and then our tongues cannot help telling of what our hearts feel. To his precious love I commend you and yours, and am, for the sake of that dear man of sorrows, your friend and servant,

W. R.

P. S. Strange doings at —! A party for me, another against me. Violent on both sides. Alas, alas! what is all this about? I sent word I should preach there on Sunday the 26th; I know not whether they will let me: if they do, I hope you will mount me on that very quiet mare I heard of last year. But more of these things when we meet. . . Jesus be with you. Amen, Amen.

LETTER XXXIII.

BLACK FRIARS, March 5, 1770.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I WAITED ON —, and he told me, he was to call at — in his way home. I could not resist the opportunity of sending, in writing, my thanks for your last kind letter. My heart rejoices, and is thankful for many things, which you

say in it, of your dependence on the finished salvation of Jesus, and of your desire to experience more of his graces and blessings. I see what stops you; the very same that stops me. And I would lay before you the gospel motives and encouragements to get on, revealed in the word, and I hope in some measure made useful to me by the spirit of God.

I have remarked, in conversing with you, and in all your letters, the workings of a legal and self-righteous temper, apt to nurse guilty fears, and to cherish misgivings and suspicions of your interest in the great salvation. The same are daily disturbing my peace, and are the very plague of my life. The only remedy against them is to look well to the conscience, where they have their rise, and to use all appointed means for establishing it in the peace of God. This is the main point. A holy walk, and successful warfare, depend entirely on the testimony of conscience. The believer's chief business is to learn to resist and to overcome guilt, fear, and unbelief, that these being kept out of his conscience, the peace of God may rule there always and by all means. Then it will be what the scripture calls a *good conscience*. And when this is good, all goes on well. Now that is a good conscience

which witnesses to the truth as it is in Jesus. Conscience, I suppose, is that faculty of the soul which, under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, compares the sinner's heart and life with the holy law of God, brings him in guilty for transgressing its precepts, and leaves him under guilt and condemnation, to suffer its just penalties. The gospel sets forth to him an infinitely perfect righteousness, to satisfy the precepts, and an everlastingly sufficient atonement, even the sacrifice of Jehovah-Jesus, to satisfy the penalties of the law. When he is enabled to believe in this righteousness, and in this atonement, his conscience is saved from guilt and condemnation; yea, it acquits and justifies the sinner, and brings in a true verdict for him. It says the same that God himself does: pleads its discharge, from the express words of the great charter of grace, under the broad seal of Heaven. With the royal grants and immunities therein graciously vouchsafed, it stops the mouth of unbelief. "Thou art freely forgiven
"ALL trespasses—Thou art justified from ALL
"things—Thou art a son of my love, and shalt
"be an heir of my glory—I, even I the Lord
"God, am thine, and thou shalt be mine for
"ever." Here the believer triumphs: and why may not you, and I too? I do, thanks be to in-

finite grace. I believe these words on the testimony of God, as spoken to me. My conscience bears witness to the truth of the divine record. It is now a good conscience; it agrees with God; and looks upon him as reconciled perfectly: it fears to dishonour him, by calling in question the infinite value of Christ's righteousness and atonement, or by doubting of their being mine, while I feel my want of them, and have any dependence upon them. Thus the peace of God rules, takes the lead in the conscience, and subdues guilty fears; rules ALWAYS. The covenant is like the divine covenanters in the Godhead, always the same; the free grant of the righteousness and atonement of Immanuel, always the same; my want of them, always the same; and my interest, though not in my sense, yet in God's purpose, always the same. These gospel motives should teach you and me to maintain this peace always, and by all means. Every thing should help to promote it. Corruptions, enemies, temptations from every quarter, should, by all means, establish our hearts in the peace of God: we should be trying at it, fighting for it; and, as it is our privilege, we should never yield, but fight hard to keep a conscience void of offence. This is warring a good warfare, when we hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience.

Believe me, my dear friend, the management of your conscience is the first and great lesson in the school of Christ ; and your chief mistakes and falls come from its not being governed by the word and spirit of God. Look to it then, and hear, and read, and pray, and walk ; that the testimony of your conscience may be agreeable to truth, as it is in Jesus. Insomuch, that when you feel any thing wrong, when you are low in spirits, your sins displease, your duties cannot please you, you should remember that these very things, rightly managed, will establish your conscience in the peace of God : because they will bring you to live entirely by the faith of the Son of God. Every new day, you live to learn from them, that you have nothing to trust to but the righteousness and the atonement of Jesus, and therefore, depending on this sure foundation, you may safely build your hopes of God's being in friendship with you, yea, in an unchangeable and everlasting friendship. O that your heart may be sprinkled from an *evil* conscience, and mind, that is an *evil* one which, through unbelief, refuses to build its peace upon the life and death of Immanuel : and that is a *good* conscience which has peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord, and expects all the love of the Father to come freely through his Son. This is the second

lesson in the school of Christ—"How shall the heart be made and kept happy in the love of God?" I answer, by believing that he is perfectly reconciled, and loves you. While there is guilt in the conscience, and you look upon the law broken, the punishment deserved, and the almighty Judge engaged to inflict it, you can no more love God, than you can love pain. But when you hear the gospel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, and can mix faith with it, then God is discovered, as related to you, in the closest bond of love, even your dearest friend, your most loving Father; which will draw out the affections of your heart to him: "For we love him, because he first loved us." His love is first, yours is second: his is the cause yours is the effect. He enables you to believe his love to you, and that excites your love to him.

You see then how much depends upon the testimony of the conscience. When this is on Christ's side, and bears a faithful witness for him, then your heart will be happy; you will have joy and peace in believing: "God is reconciled to me; he is my God: we are agreed, and now we walk together. He bids me call him FATHER; and I know he has bowels of love and fatherly affection for me: He sees me, accepts me in Jesus, and rests in his love to me. My title is

"clear to all spiritual blessings; because, God
"being my God and Father, ALL things are
"mine."

If you live like a christian, these should be the constant breathings of your heart. Your happy walk depends entirely on the belief of God's being perfectly reconciled to you in his Son: and therefore, you should not be aiming at getting any new title to your heavenly Father's love, but at new enjoyment. ALL is yours in title; but you are to seek for more, still more possession. Every day you should be seeking to believe more, to enjoy more of the riches of your Father's love in Jesus: and nothing will stop your growing enjoyment, if the peace of God rule in your heart always, and by ALL MEANS.

My dear friend, attend closely to this: for want of it, O what sad mistakes have I made! You will always find; when your heart departs from the Lord, that there has been some guilt laying upon the conscience, and representing God to you in some other light, than as your most loving Father. But, pray mind: he has always the affection, as well as the name. He changeth not in his love: he is to all his children ever of one mind; and, therefore, when you desire to enjoy his love, and in the enjoyment of it to find your heart

happy, look at nothing to bring you to the Father but the Son. Read your share in his love, take possession of it, for nothing done in you, or by you, now, or at any time, but only *in* and *for* the salvation of Jesus, in whom his Father is your Father. Thus walk with him; making Christ your way, and Christ your end: keep walking on, leaning upon Christ every step for strength, for victory over all corruptions and over all enemies, which would try to stop you from the enjoyment of your Father's love. Trust in Christ for all the blessings of it; for every thing that can keep you safe and make you happy all your way: and depend upon it, through Christ, you will find the company and presence of your God and Father a very heaven here, as well as in glory.

Mr. —, would you daily walk with a happy heart? Then you must learn to make up all your happiness in the love which the Father bears to you in his dear Son. This is to be all your salvation, and all your desire. You must look quite away from your graces, your gifts, your duties. God does not love you for these: he loves you in his Son; and you, in believing this, are to exercise your graces and gifts, and to be found in the way of duty, that you may have fellowship with him in his love.

This is the hardest task of all. I find it so to this day: and I know your temptations; therefore, I would finish this long scroll, with an account of the influence of the former truths; yet a ready answer to this question—How are my tempers to be regulated, and my conversation to be so ordered; that I may, night and day, enjoy the peace and the love of my reconciled God and Father? The way is, *to walk humbly with YOUR God*. Do not disown what the Holy Spirit has taught you: give him the honour of his own grace: he has, indeed he has, learned you to say, Abba, Father. God is your Father in Jesus. Walk humbly with him, as such: so will you enjoy his sweet peace, and partake of his happy love. While these rule in the conscience and in the heart, the tempers opposite to them will be resisted and overcome. The divine teacher will discover the secret workings of guilt and unbelief, and keep them from destroying the peace of conscience: by his almighty grace, he will mortify carnal affections, and crucify every idol-love: he will preserve the heart, as a chaste virgin, for its heavenly LOVER. Rebel-nature will resist, yea, always; but it cannot overcome the Lord God omnipotent: he *will* bring all things into subjection to himself. He *will*, nay, let me say, he *has*: E

appeal to yourself. Speak out for God. Does not your conscience say—"I will have nothing to do with any pretences to be my own Saviour; the righteousness of Jesus, and his atonement on the tree, are all my salvation." Does not your heart say—I am sure I have heard you say—"This is all my desire." Do not your hopes say—"We have cast our anchor upon Jesus; thank God, we can never be disappointed." Do not your fears say—"I would not for the world do any thing to displease my God and Father: blessed Spirit, rule in me, rule over me, mortify the old man, and quicken the new man, day by day."

Since God has done all this for you, O do not dishonour his work by hearkening to proud self, the old man of sin, who is ever reasoning within you, against the glory of divine grace. He would have you to look at yourself, and to draw your safety and happiness from some pleasing views of your own goodness. He will be always tempting you to this: but remember; that you are not to look at, or to depend in the least upon yourself, but wholly upon God reconciled in Jesus. Whatever is your own, and comes from self, is to shew you the necessity of *walking humbly with your God*. Do you not feel to this hour, that self is made up

of sinfulness, wants, temptations, and miseries? None of these should stop you, but each should help to make you walk more humbly with your God. They are to shew you your constant need of salvation, and to keep you always dependent on God for it. No failings in duty, no sense of in-dwelling sin, no weakness, no opposition should separate you, in conscience or heart, from your reconciled God, but should bring you to walk in nearer fellowship with him: by which alone, you will enjoy more conformity to him. Pride will be hid from you. Every high thought will be brought down; grace, sovereign grace will reign. And the Lord will receive ALL, I am sure it is his due, all the glory.

Here is a wide field before me; but I stop. When you send me word, that you have learned so to manage the weapons of your warfare, as to be able to maintain peace in your conscience, and happiness in your heart, and victory in your tempers and walk, then I will take up the subject, where I leave off; and go on with it. In the mean time, remember this great truth. God is *your* Father in Jesus.—You know it by faith,—yea, you enjoy the comforts of it; and therefore, the end of your walk, is not to procure a title to your Father's love, but to maintain the enjoyment.

of it. May the Lord the Spirit make you a happy partaker of it every day more abundantly.

I hear of the goodness of our dear Lord to ———. I bless him from my heart, for her. May she never want his rich cordials to comfort her soul, as long as she has a body of sin and death to struggle with. My respects to all that family. May God sanctify the present dispensation to every one of them.

My kind love to Mr. ———, and to Mr. John, and every good wish for that favourite child. He grows a fine boy, and says many pretty things. Take care, my friends, of your hearts, he has rather too much room in them, and all will be well.

Recommend me to Mr. ———, beg him, for Jesus's sake, to put up prayers for a cumberer of the ground. I am sure I do not forget him. May he never forget me before a throne of grace.

See how I scribble on;—throw a veil of love over all, and believe me to be in bonds, never to be broken, tied by the hand of Jesus, your friend and servant.

W. R.

LETTER XXXIV.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE many reasons to remember your being last year at Bath. Among other things, I sent you down the first lesson, which the great and good Master teaches all his scholars. I cannot tell, how well you learned it. But I understand he is very kind to you, and is taking a great deal of pains to make you a proficient. He sees how desirous you are of going to heaven, with this and the other comfort by the way: you are apt to think, as I do, that being such an infinitely loving Lord, he might very well spare it you—you might keep it, and yet keep his love. But herein we form a wrong judgment of him. For he does all things well—yea, he intends to do better for you, far better than you can ever imagine. He loves you more than you can possibly love yourself; and he will send you nothing but what is for your real and best interest; and he will let you find it so. His love is Almighty, and it is un-

changeable. What cannot he do—what will he not do, when his heart is set upon blessing his people? It is a common thing with him to bring spiritual good out of temporal evil: he can extract pleasure out of pain: yea, he can enrich by impoverishing, and turn losses into gain. Unto you it is now given, as a matter of his choice favour, not only to believe on him, but also to be conformed to him, by bearing his cross. This he is aiming at. He is going to advance to great honour, and to make you comforted on every side. At this very time he is training you up for it. He is now going to confer some of his special mercies, some of the greatest blessings he has to give on earth: which he bestows in so certain and fixed a way, that I know his mind and will concerning you, as plainly here in London, as if I was with you at ———, and you were to tell me all your thoughts: for indeed our Jesus is very communicative. He keeps nothing from his friends.—“And the Lord said, shall I hide from Abraham, that thing which I do?” &c. (Gen. xviii. 17, 18, &c.) No. He is of my court; and I will make him of my cabinet: Abraham shall be my privy counsellor. And the same Lord has raised you and me to the same dignity. Thus our patent runs:—“henceforth I call you not serv-

"ants: for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you FRIENDS, therefore all things which I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you." Our divine teacher still makes known to us what he doeth. He reveals his will, and lays open his heart. And according to what I have discovered of it, your second lesson is this. May he breathe upon it by his Spirit, and bless to your soul every line you read. O that all within you may say, from a feeling submission to his loving correction—**LORD JESUS CHRIST, NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE BE DONE.**

The second lesson of the Cross—or the exercise of faith in suffering.

1. They that have their portion in this life, prosper in the world, they increase in riches, they come into no misfortune like other folk, neither are they plagued like other men.

2. But whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son, whom he receiveth.

3. He dealeth with them as with sons, having chosen them all in the same election of grace, prepared for them the same inheritance, and decreed that they should go the same way to it.

4. He will not exempt one of them, no, nor

His only begotten son : who went to his crown carrying his cross, and whom the father did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son.

5. Of this he has graciously forewarned them, that they might not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try them, as though some strange thing had befallen them : he has also promised to be with them when they walk through the fire, and they shall not be burned, neither shall the flames kindle upon them. And

6. When they come out of the furnace, they shall find many blessed fruits of righteousness, which could not have grown, or been ripened by any other means.

7. Art thou then, O my soul, expecting the cross, as thy portion, prepared to take it up as the honourable badge of thy discipleship, and ready to carry it daily following Jesus?

8. Canst thou take it up in faith? Is this the right frame of thy heart? God is my God, my Father in Jesus.—He loves me with an unchangeable love, which influences all his dealings with me, and especially his present dispensation : for

9. He not only loves me with an everlasting love, but he is also now waiting to communicate it to me : my present cross is his way and means

of bringing it to my heart, and of bestowing on me some of its richest blessings.

10. True, it is painful to the flesh: but the flesh fighteth always against the Spirit, and is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and therefore the cross must be laid, and must be kept upon it, in order to weaken its power, and also to strengthen the new man, day by day.

11. There is a *needs must* for the daily cross to keep down pride, and to bring every high thought of SELF into subjection to Christ Jesus, that we may be always learning of him, to be meek and lowly.

12. Looking at the cross in this light, as the loving appointment of the Father's will, and as the means of improving faith in the Son's salvation, through the grace of the eternal Spirit, how dost thou, O my soul, find it, when it comes?

13. How is it with thee, when the cross is upon thy back, and thou art carrying a heavy, painful load after Jesus?

14. Dost thou see him before thee, who went in the same way, and dost thou honour his promises, and rely upon his faithfulness to carry both thee and thy cross?

15. When thou art chastised, and sharply, canst thou kiss the rod, and bless the kind hand

which takes such pains to purge out thy corruptions?

16. And when the smart continues from day to day, dost thou so far profit from it, as to be able to say from thy very heart—FATHER, thy will be done? Happy man! for then thou art a partaker of his holiness.

17. When it is the will of the Father to spare the child, what profit has appeared, after he has removed the cross for a time?

18. Are there any peaceable fruits of righteousness growing or ripening in the heart? Is there more joy and peace in the Son's salvation, and more happy enjoyment of the Father's love?

19. Has the Holy Spirit deadened the life of sense, by putting the cross upon it, and thereby produced more liveliness to spiritual and to eternal things?

20. Say, is the harvest good and plentiful? Do the graces flourish? Have faith and patience been in exercise, and improved? Has resignation to the Divine will been in practice, and the good of submitting to it learned by experience?

21. Thrice happy soul, to whom the cross is thus sanctified: yet a very little while, and faith and patience having done their perfect work, the

cross will be no more, but the crown will be for ever.

My very dear friend, this is my present lesson; and though I am a dull scholar, yet I get on a little. I wish you may get before me; for I am told the Master takes great pains with you: and I believe it. I am very certain you must carry your cross all the way through this valley of Baca. And what can I wish you better, than that you may find the rain filling the pools, and you may go from strength to strength. When the Lord strikes at your comforts; and mind, your cross grows out of your comforts, O that your heart may then feel submission, whatever nature feels. May all within you, guided and strengthened by grace, be able to say—Lord take away what thou wilt, only take not away the light of thy loving countenance. When thou removest any of my comforts, let me not forget they were thine; thy free gift, lent me by thy love, and kept long for me, by thy bounty. And now thou art pleased to require them, Lord, make thy will mine; and fill up the place, which they had in my heart, with thy precious love. So be it, Lord Jesus. Amen.

W. R.

LETTER XXXV.

November 13, 1770

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

SINCE last Thursday I have been in your service; heartily in it. I cannot charge myself with any neglect: and I went on more chearfully, because I thought it was my dear Master's work, which made it pleasant. But when I heard the living was last night given to a Mr. ———, judge what a blow this was. I felt exceedingly for you. I thought of Mr. ——— and the poor people at ———, deprived of the greatest blessing short of heaven. O my friend! indeed I was grieved sore, and began to complain and murmur— "Why could not the Lord have given his people a pastor after his own heart? Would it not have been for his glory? Are there not many precious souls in and about ———, who will now want their daily bread?" Thus my heart was

grieved; and it went even through my reins: so foolish was I, and ignorant: But I am recovered, and got into my right mind. Now, I confess, the Lord reigneth. He can make no mistake in his government. He does all things well, both for his own glory, and for his peoples' good. Mr. ———'s removal, a poor dead stick in his room, the joyful sound heard no more in ———, the mourners going about wringing their hands in the streets, &c. &c. &c. put as many more complaints as you please, yet every one of them shall be made to work together for good: He has said it, and shall he not do it? yes, he will do it; and you shall know it too. This very visitation shall be over-ruled to bring about many gracious purposes, perhaps such as these:

First, a submission to his sovereign will, that you may say, **ALL IS WELL.**

Secondly, self-examination: were it not for my fault, my not valuing, not being thankful for, not improving the blessed gospel, that the Lord has removed our candlestick.

Thirdly, living upon Jesus more. When the streams dry up, then people are forced to go to the fountain-head: so the means failing, his people must live upon the Lord of all means.

Fourthly, living more upon the word. If it

cannot be heard, blessed be God, it may be read: prize it: meditate on it, lay it near your heart. May it be as sweet as honey, and as precious as gold, yea as much fine gold. One single sermon to a hungry soul, will be as blessed as ten thousand to one who has no appetite.

Fifthly, trust the Lord for making an opening for the gospel, even at ———, in his own way. You cannot see how: why then that is the time to trust, pray, believe, wait: for

Sixthly, if the shepherd has any of his flock at ———, which I cannot doubt, then they cannot perish for lack of knowledge. He will either send the gospel to them, or them to it.

I own it is a trying time. If I was in your circumstances, I should want all that can be said to make me think the Lord was doing right; and therefore, my dear friend, I would lead you to some comfortable view of this matter. The blessed God enable you to give it up to him, and in patience to possess your soul. If your private loss be very distressing, try to divert the grief, and look at the public loss. O what has the church suffered in the setting of that bright star which had shone so gloriously in our hemisphere. Mr. Whitfield's preaching is over, now he is praising. We have none left to succeed him: none of his

gifts, none any thing like him in usefulness. But the same glorious Jesus, who gave him to us, has taken him away. If he wants another such—he can make him out of a stone. Well then, let us submit: let him alone—let him alone. His interest at ———, his interest in England is as dear to him, as the apple of his eye. He is managing all for the best. May you and I bow the knee and say, *Thy Will be done.*

I have no more time but to follow this letter with my prayers, that the great head of the church may teach you, practically, what I have been mentioning. And depend upon it, a day will come, when you will see this was right. Only wait: blessed are they that wait for him. Farewel, my good friend, and believe me to be yours, in that dearest, sweetest Jesus.

W. R.

LETTER XXXVI.

November 27, 1770.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HOPE we are not going to try our skill at saying fine things in the way of complimenting: I confess myself to be a malevolent creature, and have no good, and do no good, but from mere grace. Let it have all the glory. It is true, my heart is in the affair of ———, but I need not tell you, at this time of day, how much I am interested in the welfare of you and of yours. At present it wears a promising aspect. This morning I breakfasted with ———. They do not see you have the least reason to doubt, but in a short time Mr. ——— will be vicar of ———, and they said many kind things of you and your family. I long for the day when my letter is to be directed to the Rev. Mr. ——— of ———. It cannot be far off, if the commissioner's calculation be true.

that they have had a living vacant every fortnight and two days.

You cannot think how much I felt myself obliged to Mr. — for his very kind letter. I know he does not love writing, which made it more acceptable. I beg my sincere respects to him. The matter must rest as it is, till there be a vacancy. The Lord give you WAITING faith. It is the strongest faith of all. And you will have this, and every thing needful, if you continue asking in that dear name, which carries all causes in the court of heaven. O keep on praying. I do love these meetings of prayer. The living of — was actually given away. The presentation was signed. And yet — cannot get it. Your prayers have prevailed. If ever there was an answer to prayer, this is. O that God may make it an encouragement, to all of you, to pray without ceasing. I am sure it has done me good, and opened my eyes to see more of the glory of a prayer-hearing God.

Excuse my going on; my time is not my own. I have lent it to the public, till this book of the *Walk of Faith* come out. It was to have been about the size of the *Life of Faith*, but it has already got much larger. My friends who have seen it, will not let me abridge it, but say I must

add a little more, and it will be two small volumes. My dear friend, pray for it. May God make it a sweet savour of his adorable name. It is a book of many prayers; and is the life and character of yours, in Jesus.

W. R.

My wife thanks Miss ——— for her polite letter. The civilities she received were very hearty and sincere. As my wife was but poorly all the time they were in town, it is very kind in Miss ——— to look upon them in so favourable a light.

My love to the Rev. Mr. ———, I am also over-paid by his note. So we need say no more of that. I desire to share in his prayers; and do very particularly beg him to ask for a blessing upon my little books: they have been very much blessed to the author; may the same blessing attend all that read them. Mr. ——— is in my prayers. My love to Miss ———. I desire to be remembered to Mr. John, and to all the ———. My blessing on that dear boy. God bless him.

LETTER XXXVII.

December 13, 1770.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE been offering up my thanks and praise to the loving head of the church for bringing this matter to a happy issue. Glory be to him, his delays were not denials. He only wanted us to take it from his hands, as his gift, and therefore he laid difficulties in the way. When faith was tried, he removed them. Every thing is at last ended favourably. The presentation is sealed, and is safe in my study: although I have been more than a little hurt by dancing attendance here and there, yet now I seem ready to do a thousand times more to oblige such dear friends. You have it in your power to reward me a thousand fold. Lay out your thanks in prayers for me and mine, and especially for my little book, which is swelled now into two volumes. It is a child of

many prayers. I scarcely ever sit down to write, without asking a blessing upon every line. Beg it may come out with the unction of the Spirit, and carry, wherever it goes, a sweet savour of the precious name of my Lord, and my God.

I would rejoice with —, and inform him, that he must not fail to write a short letter of thanks to my Lord —, expressing his great obligations to him for keeping the living of — vacant, till the Rev. Mr. — was provided for, acknowledging how much he is beholden to him; and desiring to express it on all occasions. I mentioned in my letter of yesterday, the necessity of writing to my Lord —

My kind love to my dear brother, the vicar of —, I wish he may lie low in the dust, as unworthy, utterly unworthy, of this great trust committed to him. But there is grace sufficient in Jesus; I wish he may live on that, and do all in his parish in a settled dependence on the assistance of the great head of all the church.

My prayer is for the family of the —, that this may be a favourable providence for them all; may the Miss — enjoy present and eternal salvation by means of it. But why do I leave out Mr. —? Why indeed! may his heart leap for joy at the good news out of Mr. —'s mouth, and chil-

dren yet unborn bless God for this happy event. My dear Miss — will be among the foremost! O let him have his glory! pray, let there be a public thanksgiving. If I was at —, I would preach on the occasion, and recommend praise to a prayer-answering God. I wish you a warm Christmas, warm hearts; I am sure they ought to be so: and may you and yours rejoice in the glad tidings of the birth of our dearest Immanuel. Continue your prayers for your servant in Jesus.

The Lord keep Mr. —, and be his Jesus in the evening of his life, and his strength in age, and his comfort in weakness. So prays

W. R.

LETTER XXXVIII.

BLACK FRIARS, Dec. 27, 1770.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING an opportunity of sending a line in Mr. ——— frank, which I had out of Mr. Whitfield's study;—I could not help wishing you a happy new year; happy in Jesus; happy in growing intimacy with him. I have enjoyed a little of it, and it is indeed heaven upon earth. O for more of it at ——— in seventy-one, than ever before.

Acquaint dear Mr. ———, that at last, with great difficulty, I have settled his affair. Christmas is casting up time with booksellers. The whole of what I have paid is only a small sum.

Expect peace only a little while, you see, lest you should be lifted up above measure, thorns grow with roses. One, two, three trials, come along with the good news of success about ———. It is not your rest. Thank God it is not. You

are not at home. Get ready to go, when your Father calls for you. Some body must follow Miss ———. Who can tell, but God, whether it be you, or some of her sisters ———. O be prepared.—The door is open, step into the ark. There death cannot hurt or frighten. St. Dunstan calls!—farewel. Blessings on you and yours. Thank Mr. ——— for all his kind expressions. I gave them their value. Pray for yours in Jesus.

W. R.

LETTER XXXIX.

March 30, 1771.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

ALTHOUGH I have but time to write a line, yet I could no longer forbear acknowledging your favour. My whole time has been employed this

Lent with preaching and printing. My first volume is finished, and I hope to send you one by Mr. ———, who is in town. The report you heard of my mother's death is true : she is gone a little before, and I shall soon follow. The goodness of God to her was very great, all her life, was extraordinary to the moment of her death : so that we sorrow rejoicing. I really thank you for interesting yourself in any of my concerns. As to my usual summer journey one great motive has ceased. I can say nothing at this distance of time. I leave the Lord to plan for me : and I wish to follow no will, but his. Where I shall go next summer I have not so much as a hint yet.

My kind love to your vicar, I hear good of him. The Lord bless him in all his designs for the glory of Jesus. I desire to be remembered by you all in your prayers. Every good wish I heartily offer for Mr. ———. I am yours in Jesus.

W. R.

LETTER XL.

August 20, 1771.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAVE sent you, in a parcel directed to your brother ———, three volumes of the second part of the *Walk of Faith* as before, unbound, with one set bound for yourself, another for Miss. ———, a third for the Rev. Mr. ———, they come to ——— with many prayers. I have prayed it over in writing; and I am daily begging the free giver of every good and perfect gift, that he would go out with it, and own it to the hearts of his dear people. My design in writing the book was for his glory, and their good. The plan is simple:—it was to shew, that christian principles are sufficient for all the purposes of christian practice; so that whenever we fail in practice, we have first failed in principle. How should it be otherwise? Since the principles are

NIGHTY THROUGH GOD,—the same grace, which teaches them, as the truth of God, gives also the experience of them, as the power of God. If, therefore, peace rules the conscience, and love in the heart, the effect will follow, as light does, when the sun is risen. There will be a dependence on the promised power of God to do, and to suffer his will; and this power will as certainly be put forth, as God is true; so long as peace and love are maintained. Try yourself. Observe narrowly, how it is that you fail in practice; and you will always see your faith gave way, and you were not living up to your privileges. I know not how I have succeeded, in describing this grand mistake in the christian walk, or in rectifying it; but this I know well, that the salvation of Jesus, is absolutely, infinitely, everlastingly perfect in every part, and at the very given moment, and the belief of it will produce an even, holy, happy walk, and if this belief was perfect, (as it should be,) an enjoyment of this salvation would be upon earth, what it is in heaven. I pray God to carry you and me on from faith to faith, that we may daily bring greater honour to his word, and to his work.

If my light, or love, or joy, warm your heart in reading, remember me. My trials are very

great: I have the old burden, very heavy indeed—a vast body of sin, under which I groan, and great bodily pain, hard to bear. I have been to the sea for relief: but my Lord thinks proper to refuse it. When I had other trials, he spared me and never let me know what bodily pain was; but now outward trials are in a great measure removed; this is my cross. He is merciful in all his dealings: blessings on him for his KIND ROD! you will find in the second volume, a chapter on the outward cross, and another on the inward; they are the longest chapters, because I felt what I wrote, and because all God's children carry these two crosses to the grave. I beg your attention to the inward cross, and when you have read the chapter, be so good as to tell me *how you live it*. To manage it well, is the greatest lesson in the school of Christ: O that he may teach you as you read, and be your prophet to enable you to live upon him as your priest.

Many years ago I chose my motto—CEASE YE FROM MAN.—You see how needful it is. Place your happiness on any thing but the heavenly lover, it makes itself wings and flies away. How many sweet hours, (the remembrance is sweet) have I spent at ——? yearly visits, pleasing and profitable; but I am debarred this enjoyment. I.

must learn my motto in an instance of hard self-denial. Happy for you and for me, if every such disappointment lead us nearer to God. I beg your daily remembrance, as you are mine.—Every good wish to Miss —, and desire her acceptance of a bound set. My kind respects to Mr. —, I wish Mr. J — may walk with us in our way, and all his sisters. I wish that little dear boy, does not get some of Christ's place in your heart: God bless him, and make him a comfort to you. Write my motto upon his forehead; and remember it, whenever you look at him. My love to Mr. —. May every blessing of the everlasting covenant be yours on earth and heaven, so prays yours in Jesus.

W. R.

LETTER XLI.

February 1772.

My dear friend has been thinking—"well I could not have expected such neglect; a letter sent in October, and not answered in January, I am surprized, what can be the meaning of it?" I answer to my shame, that I am grown very lazy, and good for nothing. It is high time I was dismissed from the vineyard, and any other master but mine would have had nothing to do with me long ago. I cannot but loath myself, and stand wondering daily at his kindness. Never was self lower, and his loveliness higher than in this new year. Worthless as I am beyond all conception, yet he begun the year with vouchsafing me some delightful Pisgah views. You must know it has been a custom with me, for many years, to have a sermon on the New Year's day, and to have the text a sort of watch-word, something very short

and striking, and which may serve the believers to feast upon a twelvemonth. I have found this very useful to myself, and so have others. Our text for 1772 was, CHRIST IS ALL. I send you some remarks, believing you will have fellowship with us in them, as you certainly have in that adorable person of whom they treat.

Christ has all the fulness of salvation in him, as God-man; and he has it to the glory of the Father, and of the eternal Spirit: for it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell, as in the head for the use of his members. And it pleased the Holy Spirit to testify of his fulness in the scripture, and it pleases him by his grace to bring believers to use it, and to live upon it: and then they are truly converted. All other experience is not worth one farthing. The great work of the Holy Ghost is to pull down SELF, and to exalt CHRIST. This he does effectually, and this he has done in you. Think, what your debt is; try to cast it up; and send me the sum total. Say, how much do you owe to the Holy Spirit for enlightening your understanding, and convincing you, that Christ is the one sum of the spiritual world. What a most blessed change has he wrought upon your mind! He has stripped you of the knowledge, that puffeth up, and has sent you

to Christ, and to none but Christ, to be taught the things of God. He has brought you humbled to the Saviours feet, where you are sitting among his lowest schollars, (and that is the best place) to hear his words. Thus he has glorified your divine prophet in you; and in the matter of teaching, he has made Christ your ALL. The bible, and ministers, and means have now got their right place; they are subservient to Christ's teaching. He is exalted by your use of them: for you do not go to them, but to HIM in them, to receive lesson upon lesson, and line upon line. Thus may you and I be found waiting upon our great Lord and Master through the year seventy-two. And when we thus put honour upon his office, and give glory to his teaching, we may expect to learn much of him: he will enlarge our faculties to know more of the wonders of his grace: and he will enable you to enjoy more of the heavenly sweetness of his precious love. Yes, Lord, we have great expectations from thee: thou canst teach us far more than we have yet learned. O make us every day humbler scholars, that whatever we learn, the praise of it may be thine, and our growth in saving knowledge may add to thy fame and renown.

Methinks, I hear you ask—"But how shall I

“know for certain, that I am one of Christ’s scholars, and that he has indeed taken me into his tuition and teaching?” My dear friend, you are to know it, from what you have learned of him. You cannot be certain of it any other way. He would have you to look at his revealed truth, and to try yourself by it. Has not he made you wise in it unto salvation? O do, pray do, acknowledge what he has done for your soul. When you were sensible of your fallen state, in which you inherit a corrupt nature, and felt, that in it you could do nothing, but sin—when guilt was in your conscience, and fear was in your heart, what was it which brought you relief? To what did you look for pardon, and from whence did you expect peace with God? Your answer will shew, whether you are Christ’s scholar, and how far you have advanced in his school.

I can make your reply (for I have heard you say as much) “Why, to be sure, I have no hope, but in that offering, WHICH PERFECTETH FOR EVER, and in that righteousness, which justifieth from all things. This is my salvation—This, and nothing else—CHRIST IS ALL—I expect no pardon, but in his blood—no justification, but in his obedience—no safety, but in his

"keeping me—no happiness, but in his love—no heaven, but in the enjoyment of Immanuel."

Very well, this is a good confession. But who taught it you? Was it not Jesus? He who alone teacheth man saving knowledge. Has not he opened your eyes to see, and your heart to receive those most blessed truths? Yes he has. And do you praise him as he deserves? O no. A thought often comes into your head, "If I have learned those things of Christ, how can it be that I am so little, and so seldom comforted by them: they are full of all consolation, and I am sometimes quite empty: how can this be?" I will tell you, my good friend. The very same thought comes into my head, and plagues me; but I get the better of it. Consider where it is written—*He that is comforted shall be saved.* You are called upon to trust the work of Christ, and to trust it for yourself upon the word of Christ. His work is your whole salvation: his word, and nothing in yourself. (Here I should stop. This is the end of my paper. But I cannot get done—you must let me finish my sentence, although it be to your cost.—Well, you will forgive me, I hope, and therefore I proceed)—His word, and nothing in yourself, is to be your lawful warrant to call this salvation your own, and to use it for your own.

Rest here, giving credit to the free promise of salvation to all that will receive it; and I will lay my life of it, you will not want comfort long. You will have God's faithfulness for your security, that you are a saved sinner, and the belief of this cannot but bring peace and joy into your heart. According to your faith, so will your comfort be. But if you rest not here, get comfort where you will, it will not be true, it cannot be lasting.—Not true: because all comfort dwells in Christ; every thing else is emptiness and vanity.—Not lasting: because frames, feelings, habits, graces, joys, &c. &c. ebb and flow. Only Christ abideth the same for ever, and only his unchangeable word can fix your comfort. Trust it. Make it your constant warrant to go to Christ for comfort, and he cannot deny his word: according to your faith, so will he give unto you.

Do not think, my good friend, I would have you to walk mourning and melancholy. No. There is nothing in Christ to make you so. He is all light, and life, and love, and joy, and that without ceasing—an infinite and everlasting fulness of all blessings. I would lead you to him in the direct road, which is to lead you out of self entirely. Christ is the way—look more at him, and less at self—trust more to him, and less to

your faith or comforts—live upon nothing in yourself, but live every moment upon him—do not eye his gifts so much, fix your heart upon the giver—be always thinking of his fulness, whenever you feel your own emptiness—whatever you are, or do, or suffer, let all things bring you to make (forgive me, I must go on, I take up another half-sheet, and I beseech you again and again, let all things bring you to make) use of Christ. Read about him. Go to your closet to converse with him. Go to church to meet him. Make him your companion. Accustom your mind to meditate upon him. Pray without ceasing to him as your bosom friend. Do not be shy of him—he hates shyness. Draw near; he bids you come with boldness, vile, unthankful, unprofitable, as you are: his dear heart is always open to hear your complaints, and to relieve your distresses, be they what they will. Remember he is the sun of *our* world, and you cannot be thus always in his presence, without being enlightened by his rays, and cherished with his warm beams. When any are very cold within doors, and see the sun shining sweetly, they do not use to ask, Is it *my* sun? May I go out to walk in this noon-day brightness, and get myself warm in this delightful sun-shine? Is it for me? Yes, make use of

it, who will; it shines for you; Christ is as freely yours, as that sun-shine. You may walk in his light, and enjoy his comforts. You may take him for your righteousness, and your holiness; you may live on him, for grace and glory. He is yours,—and all he has is yours also, for your use to-day, and for ever.

Thus you see, my good friend, how we intend to live in London through the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-two. CHRIST IS OUR ALL, not only in our title to salvation, but also in our present enjoyment of its blessings. We expect a great income, and all from Christ. Our faith in him is not an empty notion, (as the world thinks,) but it is a reality. Christ is the substance; all besides is shadow: and by faith we now take possession of the substance. We live by him, and we live on him. We need envy nobody. What are princes to us? our estate is vastly beyond theirs; the inheritance is sure; the riches unsearchable; and the income—ASK AND HAVE; and that increasing through eternity. O blessed, most blessed inheritance. The prospect is not like Moses'. He only saw the country, but we go over Jordan. We, who have believed, do enter into rest. We are living in the land which floweth with milk and honey, which is the glory

of all lands. An heir of this country may live in the present cottage at ———, and yet be richer than the king. If he live this year, as he should do, by the faith of the Son of God, what are the riches of emperors compared to his? He can look into his title-deeds, and there read two clauses, which make him rich, ever beyond conception. ALL THINGS ARE YOURS—AND YOURS FOR EVER.

I know what you will think, as well as if I heard you tell me your thoughts. I am acquainted with the vile suggestions of the enemy. He may tempt you to doubt of these truths, on account of your having still so many wants. But, my friend, the more the better. We should glory in our wants. They make us rich: for we can want nothing, but it is in Christ's fulness, and laid up there for us. This makes way for a constant intercourse between you and Christ, and keeps up a holy friendship, in giving and receiving. By this means a sweet familiarity will be maintained, and a growing intimacy cherished. Christ requires you would be free with him, and draw largely upon his bank. Every moment you want something. Christ says, "here it is; come to me for it. I can deny you nothing." O go to him at his bidding, and put honour upon his love.

Your many, your great wants, will only give him an occasion to shew how much he loveth you. He has for you bowels of the tenderest compassion. He feels for you more than you can think. Blessed is that want, look at it by faith, and you will find it so, which brings you to Christ for a supply.

Do you want **TEMPORALS**—read my Grant, Matt. vi. 32. or **SPIRITUALS**—trust my Promise, Eph. i. 3. or **ETERNALS**—look at my Gift in Rom. vi. 23, and be assured I will withhold from you no manner of thing that is good. Stand upon this ground, and here survey your wants: be they what they will, trust Christ for a supply. Live like a christian, by the faith of the Son of God, for temporals, spirituals, and eternal: this is living. This is holy living: for you cannot be thus receiving every moment out of Christ's fulness, but you must feel some gratitude to your divine friend, and a growing willingness to be his debtor for grace, and to be one of his pensioners for glory. This is **HIGH** living. For then has the holy Spirit magnified Jesus in you upon earth, when you make him **ALL** and in **ALL**; and then has he given you the certain earnest, that he will bring you to heaven, where you will find Jesus **ALL**, and in **ALL**, for ever and ever.

This is a little touch of our new year's gift.

Pray tell Miss ———, it is our standing dish for 1772: I wish her a good stomach to feast on it with us. It is food and physic: I know she likes it. And I do not doubt, but in a very little time, she and I shall sit down at the king's own table, and feast with him and on him, and bless him, as long as we have our being. Pray tell them at next door, CHRIST IS ALL; and tell my dear little vicar, to whom my heart is knit, to exalt Christ—up with him; Mr.———, come, try; up with him a little higher. Pray, and preach, and live; that Christ be exalted. God bless the lifting up of Christ in the pulpit. Amen.

There is nothing I wish myself of good, but I wish it to Mr. ———. I really love my ——— friends, and often think of that precious child. O Lord keep him. Jesus save him. May death never part mother and son. I wish my prayers may be heard for him. His portion with us is worth a thousand. May he find, with us, Christ his ALL.

W. R.

LETTER XLII.

BLACK FRIARS, May 6, 1772.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

INDEED you serve me right : it is good to settle an even account with me. I was so many months in writing ; so will you be, to a day. This is rather too hard and strict a way of learning me to write oftener. I could have wished you to write again and again, and so set me an example of what I ought to do. But I submit to your judgment, and stand corrected in your own way.

Hearing of Mr. ———'s coming to town, I did think of some little note : such as "we are much hurried, time taken up greatly. So many interruptions, that when I have purposed to sit down to ask my good friend, how he does, I am called away."

Nothing came; however, I am resolved to grow better. My acquaintances are still upon my mind and heart. Distance of time and place have made no change. I love them in the Lord, and for the Lord's sake. O he is kind to you. How many singular blessings have you! how highly favoured in temporals! try to number them, if you can. How most highly favoured in spirituals! which are inestimable and eternal blessings. I feel thankfulness for you, and pray for the continuance of all your mercies, with a growing sense of your unworthiness of the least of them. Mr. ——— presses me much to say, that I will come into the north this summer: but I cannot answer him directly. If I do, it will not be without spending some time at your house. Remember in your prayers, a friend to you.

W. R.

LETTER XLIII.

November 23, 1773

MY DEAR FRIEND,

As I have not been permitted to talk to you face to face this summer, why should I not converse with you in another way? I think it right to tell you my present feelings, and how I stand affected towards you. I believe that all the true love in the world comes from the infinite fulness of Jesus. It has no other source: and he has (eternal blessings on him!) warmed my cold heart with fire of his precious love. I feel a ray of it drawing my affections to my dear friend. Its sweet influence is from above: its origin is divine: it is, indeed, of heavenly extraction and birth. No thanks to me that it partakes of some of the gracious properties of the fountain from whence it springs: for some of them it has, my con-

science bearing me witness. And these, I confess, are not natives of my own soil, nor, being planted in it, am I able to make them grow and flourish. O no! the God of all grace is the free giver: he is the mighty continuer: without him, they would have never been: without him, they would have died at their birth, and gone out, like a spark in the ocean. But I do really find some of the image and likeness of my loving Lord upon my heart, and that towards you. There can be no true friendship without a union of spirit. In order to be pure and stedfast, it must be refined from selfish views and carnal motives: it must spring from no outward attachment, but from a real agreement and harmony of soul: such is the nature of christian friendship. It is beyond all Plato's rules, and Seneca's morals: they had no idea of it. Reason, the most refined, could never understand our doctrine. He that is joined to the Lord is ~~one~~ spirit; a most wonderful union; big with blessings temporal and eternal. Among its temporal blessings, it is not the least, that he reforms the heart, and makes it loving, like his own; capable of receiving his heavenly friendship, and capable of shewing it to his praise, by especial love to his brethren and our brethren.

In whatever view I am considering our divine

friend, there is always something which gives him, and most justly, the pre-eminence. He is, and will be for ever, the most blessed head, which communicates life, and breath, and all things, to every member. In the character now before us, O how exalted, how glorious is he! yes, he is beyond all blessing and praise, for being a present Saviour to his people, as he mightily delivers them from the tyranny of their vile tempters, and renders them happy in one another. It is from his grace that they put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, &c. He plants those virtues in the heart; he waters them with the rain of heaven; he shines upon them; and he makes them flourish in spite of all the opposition of selfish passions and inbred lusts: indeed,——, he does. There are persons in the world, who are infinitely indebted to Jesus Christ, for that brotherly love, which is the bond of perfectness, and who, in some measure, walk in love according to his teaching. But they mourn, I know they do, because they find so little gratitude to him, and so little conformity to his example. Yet some likeness ther is, and they are striving every day for more; still setting out afresh, not content with any past attainment, they study both to love him more, and

to draw more virtue from him, that they may love others, as Christ also loved them.

Methinks I see one of his disciples warm and eager in this pursuit. I stop him, and ask, Sir, upon what principle is it that your heart is so set upon being like Christ : you are quite unwearied in having your own hateful tempers subdued, and in putting on the sweet dispositions of the meek and lowly Jesus ?

His answer, I am sure, would be—"The love
" of Christ constraineth me : O how I feel the
" blessed effect of being one with my Lord !—
" He has taught me in my very heart to love God,
" and man for God's sake : to this dearest Jesus I
" am indebted for my paradise restored ; and I
" am never happier than when I am sensible of
" my vast debt : for then I love him best, and am
" most enabled to manifest it to men. Beyond
" description, beyond conception of any, yea all
" the glorified saints, is the love of Immanuel to
" my soul : it is like himself, infinite and boundless ;
" it is quite free, given to the unworthiest and to
" the most unthankful : a perfect love, nothing
" but love, such as excludes all shyness and cold-
" ness, prevents misconstructions and quarrels, yea
" removes the very cause and ground of them. A
" communicative love, most generously bestowing
" a right and title to all blessings upon the beloved :

“ for thus the grant of the great charter runs : ALL
“ mine are thine—and, to crown the whole, it is a
“ lasting love ; yea everlasting, reaching from
“ eternity to eternity. The more I study and ex-
“ perience of this heavenly love, the more I find
“ my heart affected with it, and the more I wish
“ that all my friendships may reflect some image
“ of, and bring some glory to, the friendship of
“ my Jesus.”

Having read this passage over carefully, I can, if called upon, set my hand and seal to it. All this I know to be true. *W. R.* Some little spark of this holy flame (but though little, inestimable) has long ago thawed my frozen heart, and has kept a warmth of affection in it which he that kindled often hears of in prayer and praise for you, and of which they who know you, and come in my way, hear also. Some kind providence will, I doubt not, ere long, let you hear it with your own ears. With pleasing hope, I look forward to a present, because I am sure of a future, meeting, which will never end. Our friendship will run coeval with our being : it is a union formed by the divine hand of Jesus, who has won our hearts and made them one in himself, in a bond, which he will not, and none else can break : so that we may sing, in humble confidence, all our way to Sion—

The love divine
That made us thine
Shall keep us thine for ever.

Tell Mr.——he is in my debt, and I wish him to get out of it; but he must pray a good deal for me before he does; so must you. Pray the more for me. Mrs. Romaine joins in all.

W. R.

LETTER XLIV.

GRACE and peace be abundantly multiplied to my dear friend from the Lord Christ: may all whom she loves partake of his love. I have been kept from writing to you, and acknowledging your many favours to me, and to mine, by my Master's business. As soon as I came home, I was invited to preach in Buckinghamshire, where we have had the Lord with us of a truth. Oh what am I, that my eyes should see such things as I see!

I, who am the very filthiest dunghill-sinner, that ever God suffered to live; that I, even I, should partake of his grace, as well as preach it: oh, it is astonishing! Surely if ever I get to heaven, (and I must not doubt of getting thither) I shall beat Mary Magdalen, and Paul, and Peter, and Manasseh, all to nothing. They had not half to pardon that I have: and yet, glory, glory, glory be to Jesus, I am among his pardoned ONES. Who, then, shall sing his praise in such a high note as I can? None, no not one of them all. I am the most indebted to free grace of all that ever were saved out of hell. May my experience tend to the strengthening of your faith!

———, you almost overcome me with kindness. I shall be afraid to call and see you, lest you make me proud: for what have I good in me? Nothing. What good do I? None at all. Whatever good is in man, whatever good is done upon earth, the Lord doeth it himself. Down, then, with man: lay low his lofty looks, and up with Christ. Exalt him; too high we cannot raise him, too low we cannot humble the sinner. I would have you, therefore, not to look at me, but at my precious, dear Master: look unto him, and you shall be saved. Look unto me for any thing, and you shall infallibly be disappointed.

R. 2.

Present my hearty love, in the bowels of Christ Jesus, to your sister ———. I find great fellowship with her, as a member of the same body, and actuated by the same spirit: and tell her, from me, *that she cannot make too much use of Christ.* The more she uses him in all things, the happier will she be. To this I can set my seal. *Probatum est.*

I fail not to remember Mr. ———, when I am near, and have freedom with my precious Master. May you never want his presence! My wife joins in thanks, and is, with me, yours in the Lord Jesus.

W. R.

LETTER XLV.

October 28, 1775.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING an opportunity of sending my hearty love to you by Mr. ———, I could not avoid embracing it. You are often on my mind and in my prayers. Really, my dear friend, you are one of them by whom I find the truth of what I believe concerning the communion of saints. I experience it in its comfort; for I feel with you, rejoicing in your joys, and taking part in your sorrows. I have a good account of your health, a great blessing: may it continue! And of your spiritual health, which is a greater: may that increase! and it will, as you live more *in, on, and to* Christ Jesus; coming daily as a poor sinner, to live on a rich Saviour. This is the great secret of the gospel. Nothing should keep you from.

Christ. However you feel, whatever you have done, at all times, in all places and frames, go to Jesus. I have been at this lesson a great while, and though very dull and stupid, yet, through marvellous grace, I have learned something. When things go well, we are apt to rest in them: I do not. My Jesus makes them well; I thank him, and rest in him, and not in his gifts: I enjoy him in them; and when things go badly, inward or outward, I would not stay from him to complain or murmur one moment; but, rejecting myself entirely, take him for my whole complete happiness. Let things go as they will, I look at Jesus through them, and would make use of them to lead me to live more upon him. This seems easy; but try it. I wish you a better scholar at it than I am. I hear you had a warning to be ready, at the next door. I pray for its good effect. When the messenger comes, may every — lift up his and her head with joy!

I grow old, and find marks of the tabernacle's wearing out fast; but I know in whom I have believed. To him I commend you and yours. Mrs. R. joins in every good wish to all yours and you. Do not fail to pray for

W. R.

LETTER XLVI.

BLACK FRIARS, Jan. 24, 1777.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

OUR journey is settled for Thursday morning next; we move slowly. Hope to be with you on Saturday, perhaps to dinner. Will you desire Mr. B—— to give me leave to speak to his people on Sunday morning: I shall take it as a favour. I have seen poor D——: he is a very great penitent. The Lord has brought him through the fire, a miracle of mercy. Before this reach you, it is likely, he will be adoring the love of a triune God. My journey has been with much prayer. He that makes men to be of one mind in a house, will, I hope, unite us to himself by his loving Spirit, and render us useful to each other, as iron sharpeneth iron. I do not,—I cannot forget your family. I am, with great respect in one common Lord, yours,

W. R.

LETTER XLVII.

August 2, 1779.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

WE remembered you and yours, very particularly on the 7th of May last. Blessings on the birth of that day. I knew more about it in 79, than I did before. And more reason to honour and esteem you. I send you, enclosed, a little token of respect. You had it in the last war, and it is now again expedient, yea, necessary, I hope for your helping hand in this good work. Some must fight, and others must pray. One is as much wanted as the other. If Moses does not pray, Joshua does not conquer. Prayers gained the victory. Asa has a great army of one million one hundred thousand good soldiers: but he does not trust so much to them, nor conquer so much by them, as by his prayers. Jehosaphat's prayer

of faith vanquished a vast host without fighting. Read 1 Chron. v. from the 18th to the 23d verse. On this account I beg of my dear friend, to join us. You have some praying people at ———, call upon them to unite on this occasion. Remember, *the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*, James v. To-day it will avail as much as it did in the time of Elias. May God give you the spirit of prayer, that you may join the goodly company throughout the land, who will be on their knees next Sunday at eight o'clock. it is your duty; may you esteem it your privilege: and I wish you growing communion with your God, more delight daily in approaching the throne of his grace, and more blessings coming from him on you and yours. We have already many hands lifted up to engage the Lord of hosts on our side. Mine are engaged, and I trust will not hang down till peace return.

Mrs. Romaine is with me and well. With her and my best wishes, I am in our dear Lord your friend and obliged seryant,

W. R.

LETTER XLVIII.

BLACK FRIARS, Nov. 30, 1779.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I HAVE been taught to weep with them that weep; they cannot but feel with and for one another, who are joined to the Lord in one Spirit. That you suffer seems grievous to the flesh. I sympathize with you; but I also find the Lord is with you, supports you, yea he comforts you, therein I do rejoice. My prayer is for much patience under his hand, and much profit from his rod. Let me direct your attention to Hebrews xii. from the 5th verse to the 14th. The whole matter turns upon the character of the person who afflicts—is it in wrath, or in love? does he punish as a judge, or correct as a father? mind how the sentence begins; “MY SON, keep this upon your heart; you have fled to Jesus, you have taken the

benefit of his atonement and of his righteousness." You are therefore the adopted child of the most high God. And you must not think he changes his love when he changes his dispensations. He is ALWAYS your father, and say his rod is for the present, not joyous but grievous; yet mind, ver. 11, it only seemeth; the flesh seems to be hurt, but really it is not; it is only in appearance: look nearer, you may easily see love sending, love inflicting, and wait a little; you will have reason to thank your Father for the blessed fruits of his love. If you live you will find them very rich and ripe. If he spare life, my first journey shall be at ———; I have great fellowship with the afflicted. I shall hope and pray for your support and comforts; my God has promised both. May they be abundant! This summer has given me great occasion to learn the same lesson with you: and I can set to my seal that God is good and doeth good; nothing but good to his children. To his tender care I commend you, and yours. Look above, live above; both your joys and sorrows make Jesus, at least you wish to make Jesus your ALL. I am, in him, your dear friend and servant.

W. R.

S

LETTER XLIX.

Saturday, March 29, 1777.

MY GOOD FRIEND,

I HAVE an opportunity of sending my respects to you by Mr. ———: but I choose to give them to you under my own hand. Although I do not see you, yet you have a place in my heart, and in and for the Lord's sake, who changeth not, I remember ——— in my best times, you and yours. One proof of it I hope to give you this summer, if I am spared. Age is coming on fast. Infirmities many and great; travelling is a burden. But before I go hence, I purpose once more to visit my ——— friends: I feel towards them some of that grace mentioned, Rom. i. 11, 12, which grows by giving and receiving. As indeed all the gifts of Christ do: the more you use, the more you have: you become richer for what you lay out. Such a wonderful fulness flows from

Christ, that he who spends most for him, gets most from him. O that my journey may be of this kind; to your profit and mine: and to Christ's glory. I know not what time it will be; but will not wait on you, without first acquainting you, and knowing what time will be to you the most agreeable.

I am sure you do not wish better than I do. All my advice is turned into prayer. You will give my love to Mr. ———, of whom I hear good things. Mrs. R. desires her kind love to you and family. We had yesterday, such a solemn time, as I never expected to see in London. It was very truly a GOOD FRIDAY. My hopes revive for this guilty land; for them that honour me, says God, I will honour: I am sure he was honoured yesterday. Let me, my good friend, not in compliment I ask, be remembered by you in prayer. I am for my dear Lord's sake, your friend and servant.

W. R.

LETTER L.

November 16, 1786.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WAVE after wave—trouble after trouble—no ceasing, till we get into the haven. I do not wish you out of them, but to profit by them. The furnace is to refine gold; so faith, proved, improved, yea, perfected by trials. Mind what the great Refiner says—"I will bring the third part through the fire, and I will refine them as silver is refined, and I will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them. I will say, "It is my people," and "they shall say, "The Lord is my God." O blessed furnace!—What! is this the effect of being put into it? Does the Son of God appear for, and with his suffering members?—Does he keep off the evil of suffering—give patience under it, profit from it—deadens the life of sense—quicken the

life of faith—and thus bring more real good to his people from their trials than from all the comforts that ever they had? Say—It is great, an uncommon great trial: the furnace is heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. Still, this is not to destroy faith, but to refine and exalt it. The plain lesson from hence to be learned is, we must now trust more to the Lord and less to self. His strength must be our safety, and not our weakness. His blessings must be our happiness. I write these things, because I am praying for them. It is not so much advice as prayer. I know my Lord CAN, I believe my Lord WILL help you in this time of need. Whatever interest I have with him is yours. None feel for you, or can, more than I do.

I am thankful, however, for the grace of God, given unto you at this trying time. The furnace is intended, in the Father's hand, to prove faith, and to improve it. He puts it into the fire, like gold, that, upon trial, it may appear sterling, and that, losing nothing but dross, we may learn to trust him better. You now see and know that his trials of faith are acts of love. The burning bush, so far from being consumed in the flames, is cherished by them, and grows. Blessed be the name of our God, I find the miracle repeated in our

visitations. In faith and patience you possess your soul: yea, the smell of fire does not pass upon you. Where could you have learned what God has been teaching you, so soon, or so well? All is well. May you see more of his love in every dispensation! Trust him. Go on trusting, without doubt or wavering, and he will grant you your heart's desire. I commend myself very earnestly to your remembrance in the best place. Mention me to your divine and almighty friend, in whom I am, with my best wishes, your obliged servant.

W. R.

P. S. Our text to-morrow is—We are the true circumcision, &c. Phil. iii. 3. God fulfil it, and give us this communion with the Trinity!

LETTER LI.

May 16, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I COULD not neglect this opportunity of assuring you, how much I remember you in the best place. Our Lord knows the *needs must* of suffering: he loves you too well to deprive you of your portion. He himself went, and ALL his go, the same way to glory. They drink of the brook in the way; and they drink it out of the cup of salvation. True, it is bitter. I find it very bitter: as unpalatable as you can find it. But I am praying it may prove more salutary to you and to me: and this it cannot do, while we murmur and complain. It is sent to stop this working of self-will. The flesh is impatient, and frets: the spirit stops its rebellion, and says—"Not my will Lord, but thine be done." Amen! May this be the

end of all your trials! May you come out of them, like gold out of the fire!

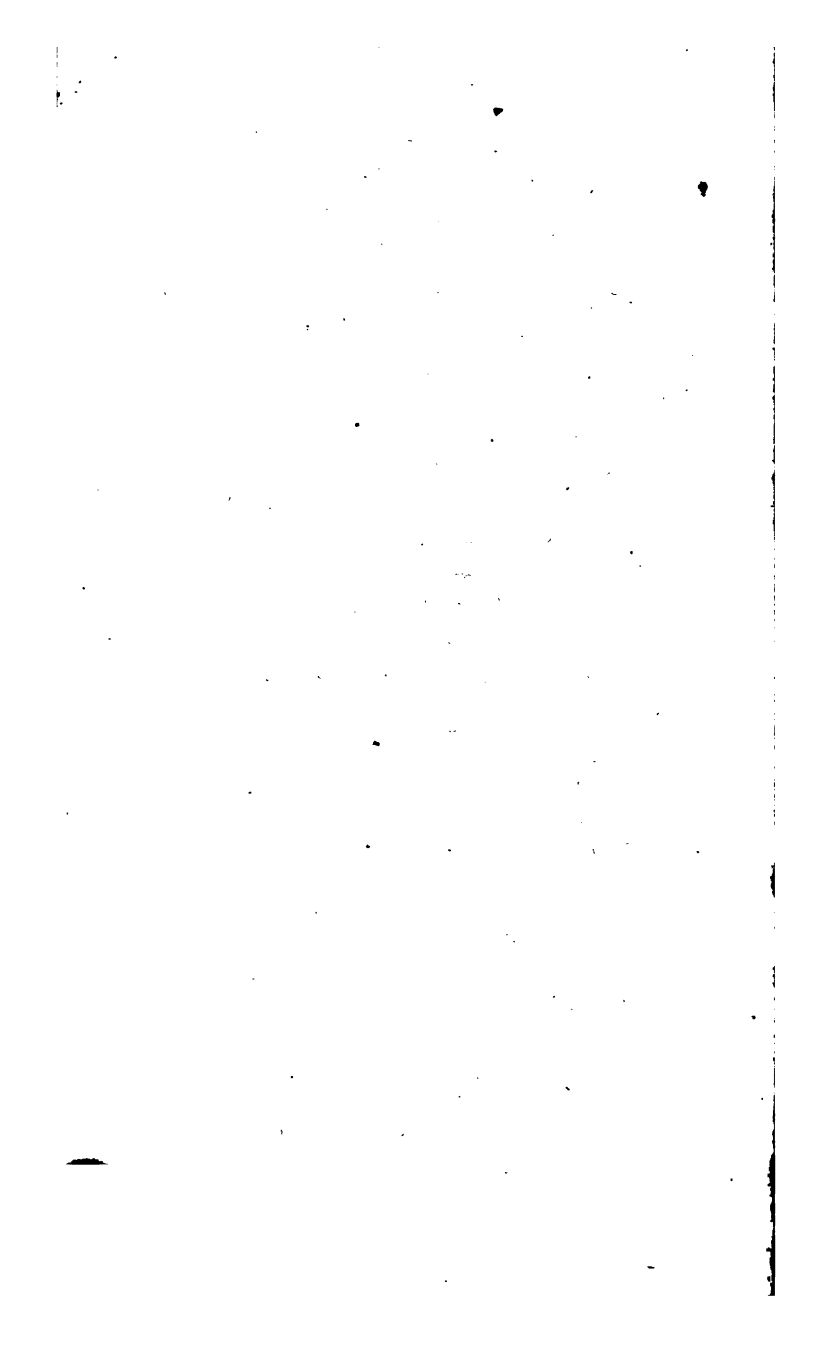
I hear you have a present exercise, viz. your young and beloved Isaac to be parted from you. There is grace sufficient even for this. You do not love your son more than I did mine. It cannot cross your will more than it did mine: but my son went into the army, and I do not repent; it was his choice. He has been kept, as far as I know, from army sins: and the same good God may also keep your son. Trust him in his loving and careful guidance; and the Lord will do what is best both for him and for you.

— your one business is to trust your ALL in the hands of Christ. Having received him, then to live upon him. Remember, he is to answer every purpose, body and soul. You and yours: earth and heaven. You are not living up to your privilege, if there be any person or thing that you keep back from Christ, and do not leave to his absolute management. The command runs — Trust in HIM at all times, ye people. Pray him to make you willing to part with your son, as he did Abraham. Pray him to give you more faith to trust him in the Lord's hand; and then follow him with your daily prayers, that the good Lord may keep him from all evil. When you have

done this, the rest must be left. The Lord will do what seemeth him good: yea, he will enable you to say, Come what may—**ALL** is well.

In a bond never to be broken, I am yours in Christ. My Blessing on your dear son, and prayers for him.

W. R.



POSTSCRIPT.

As it is possible the foregoing excellent letters may fall into the hands of many, who have not read any account of the glorious triumphant departure of their blessed Author; it has occurred to the mind of the Editor, that such of his readers would rejoice to hear the Lord's dealings with this, his distinguished servant, in his last illness. For their information, therefore, and above all, for the glory of his Divine Master, he has inserted the following particulars.

Indeed it seemed, as if the blessed Mr. ROMANE had a presentiment the day before he was taken ill, that his end was approaching; for, on going to the house of a friend, whom he often called upon, and who lived in his neighbourhood, as soon as he was seated, he said, without any introduction, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live." When his friend asked him if he had any particular meaning in addressing him thus at that time, he answered, "No:" but

said he, "these words are much on my mind; and they are a call to all, especially to those in business;" or words to that effect.

The day after, which was Saturday, June 6th, when he was first taken ill at Mr. W——'s house, at Balaam-hill, near Clapham, he said he was very sick; and at family-prayer was observed to request the Lord, "that he would favour them with grace sufficient to fit them for, and carry them through the trials of that day, which might be many." During the same day, he spoke familiarly on his approaching death; which he seemed to expect soon; and so did the family where he then was. However he wished to return to his own house that day, which he did; but was so weak that he never appeared in the public congregation afterwards.

His friend above-mentioned, calling a few days after to enquire how he did, said to him, "heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." To which he replied, "It had been a night indeed; but he had a blessed prospect of death, and a joyful hope of eternity, full of glory and immortality."

To a beloved brother in the ministry, who was soon after journeying through London, and calling upon his dying friend, he said, "that he did

“not repent of one word he had preached or printed on Faith in Jesus; but that he now felt the “blessed comforts of that precious doctrine.” A noble testimony this, in favour of the precious treatises on faith he had at several times been enabled to publish, viz. *The Life of Faith*, *The Walk of Faith*, and *The Triumph of Faith*; to all of which his own happy experience and bright example afforded the most striking illustration.

He now considered his public ministry was at an end, and that he was soon to enter into the joy of his Lord; which he was the more confirmed in, from the extraordinary communion he had with God, and the peculiar Pisgah-views of glory he was at this time favoured with. He would take little or no medicine; he had no desire, now his labours were over, to stay any longer here; he knew he was soon to be with the Lord for ever. For this he was now waiting; he longed to depart and to be with Christ, which was far better. When he spoke to any select friend, which he could bear but seldom, and that but little at a time, it was all about Jesus.

Being asked one day, if he would like to see some of his friends? his answer was, “he did not want better company than he then enjoyed,” meaning his lovely Saviour. To those about him

he at one time said, "you are taking much pains to prep up this feeble body; I thank you for it, but it will not do now." When a friend expressed his hope that he was happy in his views, he answered, "yes, upon that point I have no doubt, "for I have much of the presence of Jesus."

At another time, being asked if God was with him, he replied, "yes, he is indeed; and he is *my* God." To another dear friend, he observed concerning his present weakness, "it was all mercy, all mercy;" and then gave her his parting benediction, sending at the same time his blessing to her husband and only son. In all this visitation, not a single murmuring word was to be heard from his precious lips; he knew, he felt, it was all love. He had the presence of Jesus, and the light of his countenance; how could he then complain? he enjoyed a very heaven upon earth. It is this makes heaven to be what it is; it constitutes the very essence of it; yea, this is the heaven of heavens; hence, when he was frequently asked how he was? his general answer was, "as well "as I can be this side heaven." To his worthy curate and successor, he said, at one time, "he "had lain long at first in the arms of death; and "if recovering, it was very slowly; but this, said "he, is but a poor dying life, at best; however I

"am in his hands who will do the best for me;" adding with a peculiar energy, "I am sure of that; I have lived to experience all I have spoken, and all I have written, and I bless God for it."—To another he said, "I have the peace of God in my conscience, and the love of God in my heart, and that, you know, is sound experience." and again, "I knew before the doctrines I preached to be truths: but now I experience them to be blessings," Another friend he thanked for "coming to see a *saved sinner*." According to what he had often declared should be his dying boast, even the language of the publican; "God be merciful to me a sinner!" to another he said, "I shall soon be upon the Mount Zion that is above; there I shall dwell for ever; and there I shall enjoy my everlasting rest."—All his complaint was of sin, which, said he, "is a source of all our misery." One morning, near the end of his life, he read in the family devotion, of the sickness and prayer of Hsekiah; and said, "Now I should have none of this weakness and languishing, if I had no sin; but God be thanked for *hope* in death, yea for *life* in death."

At another time, as he sat at breakfast, he said, "as it is now near sixty years since God opened my mouth, and my heart, to publish the everlasting

sufficiency and eternal glory of the salvation of Christ Jesus ; now it has pleased God to shut my mouth to give me more experience in my heart, of what I have said concerning it in my life." After breakfast he was helped into the next room, not being able to perform the family-duty ; but desired the door might be left open whilst they were at prayer ; when his son read, expounded, and prayed ; after which, the mistress of the family went to ask him how he did ? " O thanks be to God, (he replied) for his mercy and goodness that hath surely followed me all the days of my life ; and blessed be his name, that I have lived to see this day, that I should be blessed with a son to be a son of God."

On the 24th of July, being helped down stairs, he cried out, " O how good is God ! what a good night he has favoured me with ; and what a blessed prospect now I see before me !" Mrs. Romaine coming in, said, " I hope, my dear, you now find God your support, and his promise of life in Christ Jesus your comfort ?" " Yes, (he replied) do, my heart and flesh and strength fail me ; God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever. The Lord bless you, and reward you for all your kindness, and tender care, and affection ! A covenant God be with, preserve,

and bless you for ever!" His kind hostess then coming in, said, "Have you not a blessing for me, Sir?" "Yes, God Almighty bless you," he replied. The night following, he was rather restless, and not being able to come down stairs, when his friend returned from town, about three o'clock, and went up stairs to ask him how he was; he answered, "Very well, and glad to see you." He then shook hands with him, and said, "What are you going to town again?" He replied, "No, but I am come to pray to God to bless you now with the comfort of his sweet salvation, and to give you now the blessed possession and enjoyment of life everlasting." "Amen! Amen! Amen!" he cried out. Some time after, his kind Gaius went up to him again (when his departure was expected every moment) and said, "My dear and blessed friend, I hope you now find the dear Saviour Jesus Christ, precious to your heart?" "Yes, yes, precious indeed, more precious than rubies, and all that can be desired is not worthy of being compared unto him, the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God." His worthy friend adds, that prayer and praise was almost all that could be heard, as long as his tongue could speak, or he had breath to draw. "Many a happy hour (he observes) have I spent with him,

but none equal to the last; (and respecting himself) I believe the last hour of his life, was the happiest hour in all his life; which he closed most triumphantly, saying, "Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty! glory be to the on high for such peace on earth, and good will unto men!"

A little after twelve, he finished his course, fell asleep, and entered into his eternal rest; departing this life without a struggle, sigh, or groan.

END OF THE LETTERS.

A
S E R M O N,

BY THE LATE REVEREND

WILLIAM ROMAINE, M. A.

JEREMIAH viii. 22.

Is there no Balm in Gilead? Is there no Physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?

ALL men love health. The desire of it is founded in nature. It is one of the natural instincts which never leaves us. So long as we love pleasure and hate pain, we cannot but love health, as the chief of all outward blessings. Indeed it is to be desired beyond them all, because without it we can enjoy none of them; without it we are unfit for our worldly business and employment, and unfit for the duties of religion. A good man would therefore wish for health with a view to the concerns of a better life, as well as to those of the present life. All men desire it upon a temporal

account. But alas! how few have a real desire for the health of the soul? If the body be in great pain, with what haste do they send for relief, and how carefully do they follow the physician's prescription? But when their souls are wounded with sin, and they may endure the smart and anguish of their wounds for ever: for these are, by any human means, incurable; and when a divine remedy is proposed, and they hear of a loving and an almighty physician, under whose hand no patient was ever lost, yet they have not one wish to be healed. What can be the reason of this? Why are the very men, who with an invariable affection love bodily health, so far from desiring the health of the soul, that when they have an offer of being healed of all their spiritual maladies, they neglect the remedy, and despise the physician? Is not this unaccountable conduct? What can make the same men in the same case reason so differently? If they had an infallible remedy for the recovery of bodily health, there is not one of them who would reject it; but there is a sovereign remedy for the recovery of the health of the soul, there is balm in *Gilead*, and a most kind and able physician there to apply it, and yet spiritual maladies abound. Let us enquire into the cause of this inconsistent behaviour. It is an enquiry in which we are all nearly concerned. Our welfare depends on our being healed of the wounds of sin by this balm of *Gilead*. We can have no true peace of conscience here, nor no true happiness hereafter, unless we take this sovereign medicine. May the Lord God dispose us all to take it by means of what shall be said in opening and explaining the text, in which there is,

First, Some sickness referred to.

Secondly, A sovereign medicine—there is balm in Gilead to heal it.

Thirdly, A great physician to apply it; and all the means of healing being thus ready at hand, the question naturally follows, in the

Fourth place, Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?

If we look back to the 17th verse we shall find an account of the sickness referred to in the text.

The people were stung with serpents and cockatrices, and of the most venomous and fiery sort, whose poison once infused into the blood, acts like the most raging fire, consuming and drying up the fluids of the body, and in a short time bringing on certain death. "For behold I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which will not be charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the Lord." This is a just picture of that more deadly poison, which the old serpent the devil infused into both body and soul, the effects of which all the human race have felt: for he drew us all into sin, and the dreadful consequences of sin appear in that variety of diseases which bring down our bodies to the grave of death, and in that variety of corrupt and depraved appetites, which proves the soul to be alienated from the life of God, and to be incapable, unless it be entirely changed, of enjoying God. It was sin which thus poisoned our nature: for before sin entered into the world, all things were good. There was no evil to afflict either body or soul. But when sin entered, then the sanction of the law took place, "In the day that thou eatest of the forbidden

"fruit, dying thou shalt die." Gen. ii. 17. In that day thy body shall become mortal, and liable to those pains and diseases which in a course of years shall destroy its animal life, and thy soul shall be separated from the fountain of its spiritual life, and cut off from all communion with God in this world, and in the next it shall be separated from him for ever, which is the second death. Oh sin! what hast thou done! Thou art the author of all the evils which mankind are capable of suffering in earth and hell. Thou broughtest them all upon us, thou enemy of God and man. And wilt thou afterwards pretend to be our friend? Wilt thou come to court us with promises of happiness, that by deceiving us, thou mayest more effectually poison and destroy our bodies and souls? Look upon this base traitor, my brethren. Can he be a friend to your nature, who has subjected it to all the miseries of mortality? If you have any true love for yourselves, how can you love and cherish sin, which has made you liable to suffer the first and the second death? What! is this a friend to be taken into your bosom, one that will murder your body, and bring both body and soul into hell? Accustom yourselves to view sin in this light, and it will help you to see the horrible destructive nature of it. When you behold a dead corpse, think what a murderer sin is: for that body would never have died, if sin had not poisoned it. And then turn your eyes inwards, and let each man say to himself—This beloved body of mine, upon which I spend so much time and care, was made mortal by sin, and all the pains and diseases, which I can suffer, came from

the same cursed cause ; yea, from it came all the miseries which I deserve to suffer with devils and condemned spirits in the fire that never is to be quenched, and shall I love and delight to serve such an enemy ? Shall I give up the members of my body as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, and so work out mine own everlasting destruction ? God forbid. As sin is the author of all the evil, which I do or can endure, I will therefore fight against it, and may the Lord God save me from the guilt, and deliver me from the dominion of it.

This is the language of every heart, which is made sensible of the poisonous qualities of sin. When the awakened sinner feels the malignant venom working in his constitution, he will be led to abhor and to detest it, and the more so, when the scripture discovers to him the execrable foe, who poisoned him with sin, and that was the old serpent. What these serpents are said in the 17th verse to have done to the body in poisoning it, the same did he both to body and soul ; and as he did it at first in the serpent, he has therefore been known and distinguished by this name from the time that he deceived our first parents in the subtle serpent. The apostle has given us a very alarming description of him, Rev. xii. 9. where he is treating of the war which was in heaven between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his angels. " And the great dragon, he says, " was cast out, the old serpent, called the devil and " satan, who deceiveth the whole world." Here he is called the serpent, alluding to his crafty williness, and the old serpent, to denote his having employed all the wiles to deceive and ruin man-

kind. As soon as they were created he plotted their destruction, and he became satan, their sworn adversary, and the devil, their accuser, who sought to destroy their precious lives with the rage of a dragon; yea, with more rage than common dragons have, even with the burning fury of the great dragon. And alas! he was successful: for he deceiveth the whole world. He poisoned the whole human race. He corrupted all flesh, and we are now groaning under the dreadful effects of our total corruption. The cursed venom of sin, which he infused into our bodies, still works in them; but its more cursed venom still works, though less perceptibly, in our souls. The poison keeps working in the body, until it brings on sickness and death, and reduce us to the dust, from whence we were taken; and it keeps working in the soul in every hateful and unholy temper, which tends to stir up the wrath and indignation of God, and to separate the soul for ever and ever from him the fountain of life and glory.

This is the great and universal malady referred to in the text, the malady of sin, with which the old serpent, the devil, has poisoned the whole world. When he deceived our first parents, he then poisoned the fountain, and all the streams which have been ever since flowing from it partake of the direful infection: for the word of truth declares, "That as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned." Here the entrance of sin is said to be the cause of the entrance of death, and we will all die in *Adam*, therefore we all sinned in him: for the wages of

sin is death. Now God being infinitely just and righteous would not pay the wages, unless there were some sin to deserve them, but infants receive the wages of sin, and consequently they are sinners; they die in *Adam*, because in him they sinned. "For by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Thus was our whole nature, both body and soul, corrupted by the fall, and there is not a sound part or faculty in either of them. They are corrupt and abominable altogether, and in nothing does this total corruption more evidently discover itself, than in their entire blindness and insensibility of their dangerous condition. They are poisoned, and yet they know it not; nay, they are so unwilling to know it, that when we inform them of it, they are highly offended. They cannot bear to be told of it, no, not by the ministers of the gospel, whose office and duty it is. We are sure to stir up their rage and hatred, if we discover to them the workings of this poison in their hearts, and if we appeal to the affects of it in their lives, and refer them to the plentiful streams of iniquity, which are continually flowing from the corrupt fountain of the heart, then they cannot bear us; they are like the deaf adder, that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming ever so wisely. They are resolved not to be disturbed about their sins, and therefore they will not hear of their sickness or of their danger. They had rather die of their malady, than be made uneasy about it. Let sin do its worst in the next life, in the present they will enjoy it; and in sweet security too, if they can. Is not this an

astonishing degree of infatuation? Is it not one of the strongest delusions of the devil, that he should make those very men insensible of their spiritual maladies, who are exquisitely sensible of the last bodily malady, whose fears are all alarmed at the thoughts of their dying to this world, but who have not the least concern about their dying from God and glory? Are any of you, my brethren in this case? Are you easy about the state of your souls, having never been in any distress about original and actual sin? Did you never feel yourselves so sick of both, that you were afraid you should perish everlastingly? If not, consider what it is, which keeps you in this fatal security. Are not you sinners? For all have sinned. And has not sin poisoned both body and soul? And is not this one of the sad, stupifying effects of its poison, that while there is not a step between you and death, yet you have no concern about your being healed? Are these things so? If they be, may the almighty God awaken you to a sense of your danger. Oh! that he may set home and fix such a conviction of sin upon your consciences, that, feeling your malady, you may earnestly seek the great physician's help, and may happily find that there is balm in Gilcad; which is the

Second particular I was to consider; Glory be to God, who hath not left us without remedy. Our disease is dangerous, but there is balm in Gilcad, which can heal perfectly and eternally. The country of Gilcad was famous for a precious balm which grew there. "Go up to Gilcad, and take balm," says the prophet Jeremiah, xlv. 11.

Its healing virtue is described by him, chap. li. 8. where speaking of the downfall of Babylon, he says, "Take balm for her pain, if so she may be healed." This sovereign medicine, which then grew in Gilead, could assuage the pain of wounds and heal them, and thereby was a type of the gracious remedy, which God had provided for the healing of the wounds of sin; namely, the most precious blood of the lamb of God, applied and made effectual by the holy Spirit: for as this cleanses away all the polutions, so it heals all the diseases of sin. The scripture has treated largely of its healing virtue, but it is no where more forcibly recommended than in the parable of the good Samaritan. Our Lord says, "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." This certain man was Adam, whose possession was in a paradise of peace and rest, and there he was innocent, safe and happy. But he left this blissful state of his own accord, contrary to God's express commandment, and he fell among thieves, satan and his angels, who drew him into sin, and stripped him of his raiment, robbed him of his righteousness, in which his soul had hitherto appeared in immaculate purity before God. This spotless robe they took away, and left poor fallen man naked and wounded. They wounded his body with those pains and diseases, which bring it down to the dust, from whence it was taken; and they wounded his soul in all its faculties, his understanding with darkness, his will with a vicious choice, and his affections with

worldly mindedness, so that he placed his love upon the creature instead of the Creator ; they wounded his conscience with guilt, and with fear of death and of hell. " And they departed leaving him half dead : " for his soul, the better part, was separated from God, and already dead in trespasses and sins, and the body was dying. When man was fallen into this helpless state, the patriarchal dispensation took place from Adam to Moses, under which the first-born was priest, and had a right to offer up the appointed sacrifices ; but these could not give life to the sinner, and therefore the priest came and looked upon him, and passed by on the one side, being unable to raise him up from the death of sin. Next succeeded the levitical dispensation from Moses to Christ ; The Levite came and looked upon him, and passed by on the other side, being unable, by any of the legal rites and ceremonies, to raise fallen man to his former righteousness and perfection. " But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, " came where he was." Samaritan signifies keeper, and it here stands for the keeper of Israel, whose compassions fail not ; " for when he saw " him, he had compassion on him." His love disposed him to use his power for the sinners recovery. He was almighty, and he resolved to use his almighty power to heal him. He went up to him, and applied the balm of Gilead—" he bound " up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine," wine, the established type of the most precious blood of the lamb of God ; and oil, the known emblem of the salutary influence of the holy Spirit: Pour these into the deepest and most dangerous wounds

of sin, and they will infallibly work a perfect cure: for the blood has a divine virtue to heal, being appointed and ordained of God for that very purpose. It cleanseth us, says one, who had experienced its virtue, and by cleansing healeth us, from all sin. And no wonder: because it is the blood of God. He, who shed it, was God and man united in one Christ, and therefore it had infinite and divine merit. And when he stood in the place of sinners, obeyed and suffered for them, and was obedient even unto death, his obedience and sufferings could want nothing to render them as satisfactory as the law and justice of the Father could require: because his blood had virtue as a release to discharge believers from all the pains and penalties, to which they were subjected for their sins, and as a purchase to put them in possession of their forfeited estate. The apostle describes its operating, as a release, when he says of it, "that we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins," and as a purchase, when he says, "that Christ, having washed us from our sins in his own blood, hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father."

Now since the blood of Christ has this sovereign healing virtue, and since we have through it redemption, even eternal redemption from all the pains and miseries of sin, surely then, it is an essential ingredient in that precious balm of Gilead, which has virtue to heal every sinner who takes it, let his case be ever so dangerous? But then it must be taken. A sick man may have a very good remedy at hand; but if he never take it, it can never cure him. In like manner, it is not enough that the blood of Christ can heal, but in order to

heal, it must be applied. The application makes it effectual, and therefore we read of the blood of sprinkling both in the Old Testament, and in the New. The blood must be sprinkled upon the conscience in order to heal the wounds of sin, and this is the office of the holy Spirit. He applies the blood of Christ: He brings this healing balm to the wounded soul. And as oil was the emblem of his salutary influence, therefore in the good *Samaritan's* prescription we find the medicine was made up of oil and wine, of the blood of Christ, and of the grace of his Spirit, which two, sweetly joined and tempered together, make up the healing balm of Gilead. There is not a wound of sin so deep, a disease of sin so desperate, but the blood of Christ applied by the holy Spirit can heal them: for God hereby healeth the broken in heart, and giveth this medicine to heal their sickness. Although they be half dead, yet it can recover them; because it operates by a divine and almighty power. The blood of Christ can raise the dearest soul to justification of life, and through sanctification of the Spirit this life is renewed and strengthened day by day, until every spiritual malady of sin be removed, and sorrow and sighing be done away for ever. Hear this, ye mourners in Sion, and lift up your drooping heads. Looking into yourselves you may have reason to grieve. Your sins are many and great. They have wounded your consciences. You feel the smart, and your distress is exquisite. But despair not. Lo, there is balm in Gilead. The blood of Jesus is an infallible remedy. The holy Spirit is almighty to apply it, and he has already shewed you your want of it. Oh! that he

may give you grace to wait until he supply your wants, and you feel its sovereign virtue healing your wounded consciences. And to encourage you to seek and wait until you find, remember that there is not only balm in Gilead, but also that there is a physician there; as I am, in the

Third place to consider, under whose hands you cannot fail of a perfect recovery; and he is no less a person than the great physician of souls, who is also God over all, blessed for ever. He who created all things, visible and invisible, and who supports them by the word of his power, vouchsafes to heal his people of their sins; so there can be no doubt of his power, because he is almighty to heal. And can there be any doubt of his love? Did not his love bring him down from heaven to the lowest humiliation, even to veil his divine glory under a covering of flesh, and did not his love then lead him to put forth his divine power to heal every one who applied to him for a bodily cure? Whereby he demonstrated to us his readiness to exert the same power to heal the spiritual infirmities of those who come to him for his assistance. The eternal God, whom angels and arch-angels worship and adore, was pleased to be manifested in the flesh, so that God and man were one Christ, and the one Christ, the God-man, stood up in the place of sinners, as their representative; for them he obeyed the law, and suffered the pains and penalties due to the breach of it, that by his stripes they might be healed: He was obedient, even unto death, and then rising from the dead, as their representative, he wrought out an all-perfect righteousness for them, which being imputed unto them by faith,

they thereby receive justification to life, and all the deadly wounds of sin are healed. Thus the great physician of souls has demonstrated his love. You may read it in every action of his life, and in every suffering unto death. You may read it engraven in every wound of his crucified body. What were the marks and scars which the crown of thorns made in his head, and the whips and scourges made on his back; but visible signs and seals of his love? The love which led him to his agony and bloody sweat, to his bitter cross and passion, was greater than that of the strongest instinct and natural affection in the human breast: "For can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion upon the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee, saith the Lord: for I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands." While he looks upon them, he cannot forget his people: because on the palms of his hands are the prints of the nails by which he was fastened to the cross, and these prints are the precious engravings of his wonderful love. Look upon the crucified Jesus, my christian brethren, as wounded for your transgressions and bruised for your iniquities; and see if ever there was love like his. Every wound speaks forth his love, every bruise loudly proclaims the greatness of it. His death demonstrates his love to have been stronger than death, and his pierced side shewed that he had set his people as a seal upon his heart; for from thence there flowed blood and water, water to cleanse the pollution, and blood to heal the wounds of their sins. Surely then, he who shed his heart's blood for them can-

not want love? Let this encourage poor dejected souls to wait upon him. Why are ye so troubled, as if God had not provided a medicine to heal the broken-hearted? Is there not balm in Gilead? Is there not a physician there? Oh! wait upon him then for his kind assistance, and you will certainly find that the fountain of his love is not dried up. He is now indeed on the throne of glory, king of kings, and lord of lords, but he has the same tender heart, which once bled to death upon the cross. Apply to him for relief, and he will not cast you out. You can have no distemper, but what he has power to heal: for he is an almighty physician. And no distemper but what he has love to heal; for God is love, and the Saviour the Lord Christ is God. How great soever the wounds of sin may be, yet if you fall low at his footstool, crying for mercy, he will not reject your suit. What! was it ever known that he cast out the prayer of the poor destitute? No. There never was, and there never will be such an instance. When he was upon earth he never refused to heal any one who asked his help. He never sent one single person away unrelieved, whatever his disease might be, or however unworthy he was to be healed of it. He cured all that came to him, and he did not half cure them, but it is written, "they were made perfectly whole." Perfectly does he heal all the wounds of sin, and eternally. He heals for ever. His medicines restore his patients to everlasting health. He forgiveth all their sins, and healeth all their infirmities, and thus admits them into the city of the living God, the inhabitant of which shall not say, I am sick; for the people that

dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity, and so freely and fully forgiven, that God will remember it no more. And is this indeed the character of the great physician of souls? Is his heart so full of love, that he is always disposed to use his power for the perfect recovery of convinced and afflicted sinners? Is he as willing as he is able to heal them? No doubt he is. Let such persons then seek his help, and look up unto him for medicine to heal their wounded consciences. He hath wounded you out of love, and he will heal. He hath convinced you of your wants, in order that you might wait upon him to have them supplied. Wait then, and he will give you abundant reason to admire and to praise the wonders, which he will do for you and for your salvation. He will pardon you freely, and will heal all the wounds which sin has made, and then he will enable you to declare upon your own happy experience, that there is balm in Gilead, and a physician there.

Now since this is the case, why do men labour under the maladies of sin? Since the blood of Christ is the sovereign balm, and Christ is the physician, whose power and love are able and willing to heal the most desperate disease, and the holy Spirit is almighty to apply the healing balm, may we not then reasonably enquire, Why is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered? And this is the

Fourth and last particular to be considered. Why are any men sick, when they have an offer of health? Do they choose, do they love sickness? Yes. The same men, whose every pulse beats after bodily health, choose and love spiritual sick-

ness. They are alarmed at the least disorder which attacks the body, and yet they have no concern about the soul, although it be wounded with sin, and sick unto death, yea just ready to perish. How absurd is this-conduct? Thus to prefer the health of the meaner and baser part of their constitution to the more noble and exalted part, is a flagrant absurdity. Nay, not to desire the health of the soul, when it is offered them, is acting unnaturally against their own interest. To reject it, when the great physician himself offers it in his word, is treating him with vile ingratitude; and not to receive his inestimable remedy at his hands, when he sends out his ministers to invite sinners to take it, to spurn it from them, as if it was a thing which they did not value or did not want, this is the height of sin and wickedness; for whosoever thus accounteth the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and thereby doth despite unto the spirit of grace, for him there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment and fiery indignation.

This being the case, the question returns, What can be the reason, that the health of the daughter of my people is not recovered. Here is the all-healing balm of Gilead, here is an all-wise, and an almighty physician, and why then, my brethren, will you not for his sake, for your own sakes, receive the sovereign medicine at his hands? What other cause can be assigned, but that you love your disease more than health. Sin, with all its infirmities, is dearer to you than the full enjoyment of the pleasures of a perfect recovery. Sin, although you die of it, is more precious, than to receive

life from the hands of our redeeming God. Sin, although it send you to hell, is more desirable than health in heaven. Sin, although it bring on you never-ending torments with devils and condemned spirits, is sweeter to you than these eternal joys which are at God's right hand for evermore. Oh! what a wonderful delusion is there in sin, that it should thus make men love it more than health and happiness? How strong is the delusion, since the same men reason in the things belonging to the body, directly contrary to what they do in things belonging to the soul! Propose immediate relief to any of them lying in a severe fit of the gout or stone, they embrace the proposal with eager joy. Propose immediate relief from the pains and miseries of sin, they will not hear of, much less take the remedy. There is balm in Gilead, a physician is there, even the Lord Jesus, the sovereign physician of souls, and yet they will not apply to him. Sick as they are, and ready to expire with the infirmities of sin, yet they had rather perish than be beholden to him for a cure. All his attributes, his power, his wisdom, his goodness cannot win them. All his graces, his pardoning, justifying, sanctifying grace, have no influence. He may be a God almighty to save, but the charms of sin, though but for a season, seem to them preferable to the blessings of his present and eternal salvation. But whence is it that sin should be capable of deluding men so far as to make them prefer sickness to health? The true cause is this: Sin blinds their eyes, and hardens their hearts. It stupifies and deadens the senses, so that they feel not their spiritual in the same manner as

they do their bodily diseases. The understanding is in darkness, they know not that it is diseased. When they know it, the memory is short and soon forgets it. When they remember it, yet conscience is fast asleep; it neither checks the will in the choice, nor the affections in the love and enjoyment of sin. Thus has sin impaired all their faculties, and they have no desire to be healed, because they are insensible of their malady. When we endeavour to convince them of it, they will not believe us; And because they do not feel the immediate smart of their sins, they will not therefore give credit to us, when we declare, from the word of God, that they will smart for them, and to eternity, unless they come to the physician of souls to be healed. And this will be the case, so long as they are intent upon their present pursuits, and live entirely to sense and to its enjoyments. All this time their own hearts deceive them; for it is one of the greatest delusions of sin, to keep men ignorant of the true state of their souls. It flatters them with peace, while the Almighty is at war with them; and it promises them happiness in the enjoyment of those things, which will bring on them eternal torments. And while it keeps them in this state of carnal security, nothing can appear to them more absurd than to hear that they are sick, when they fancy themselves to be in perfect health.

1. My brethren are any of you in this state? Do you feel no pain, and do you apprehend no danger from your sins? Are you entirely secure, although your sins be unpardoned, and God might glorify his justice by immediately inflicting the

deserved punishment? Nay, do you not find part of sin's punishment already inflicted, and why then should you hope to escape the remaining part? For have you not suffered some of those pains and sicknesses, which in a course of years will infallibly bring down your bodies to the grave, and inflict the sentence on them, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The body was not at first liable to this sentence, until sin poured its cursed poison into it, and infected it with those painful maladies, which no art of physic can heal; and which wear it down to the grave of death. Every pain which it feels, every sickness which it labours under, all the outward and inward dangers which threaten its mortal life, are owing to sin; for the wages of sin is death. All the harbingers of death, which afflict and weaken men's bodies, and thereby prepare the way for his seizing on them, and carrying them prisoners to the dark and cold regions of the grave, all these derive their power over us from sin; for, as by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men; for that all have sinned. Sin has most undoubtedly wounded your bodies with pains and sicknesses, with mortality and death; and what a madness then and infatuation is it to think, that sin has not wounded your souls as well as your bodies? For what says the scripture? "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Is not that a desperate wound? "It shall die." How! Can the soul die? Yes. It may be dead in trespasses and sin. Its death consists in being separated from God, the fountain of life, and in having no communion with him.

either in this world or in the next. And is not this a greater punishment than the death of the body, and is it not infinitely more painful too, thus to die from God and glory, and to be tormented with the worm that never dieth, and in the fire that never shall be quenched? What! is not that a wound indeed which thus alienated you from the life of God? yea, a most dreadful wound, the torment and anguish of which you may suffer for ever and ever? Men and brethren, are these things so? Examine the evidence and determine, Is not sin the great murderer, who has wounded your bodies with pains and diseases, and mortality, and has separated your souls from God, the fountain of life, and made you subject to the first and second death? Is not the proof of these truths as complete and full as the case will admit of? Does it not amount even to a demonstration? And do you not then stand in need of some sovereign balm to heal you, and do you not want a physician? You certainly do, as much as ever dying men did. And why then do you neglect the remedy, and slight the physician?

But perhaps some person may say, How can these things be? Am not I in perfect health, and how then can I labour under those diseases which you are mentioning? Yes, my brother, you may be in health, your body may be perfectly well, but you have a miserable, sinful soul within you, which is infected with the plague and foul leprosy of original sin, and which has been wounded with thousands of actual crimes. This is your case, and it is most deplorable. All the powers in nature can give you no relief. There

is no remedy in heaven or earth, but the blood of Jesus Christ applied by the grace of his good Spirit, and yet sin has such power over you as to persuade you to neglect that precious medicine, without which you must perish everlastingly.

What! say you, Can I be in this desperate condition, and not know and feel it? Yes, you may. It is an undoubted matter of fact, that sin brought as many diseases upon the soul, as it did upon the body. Indeed it left the soul entirely sick, and without any soundness in it, as we daily confess in the words of our church, "there is no health in us." And if there be no health in you, surely then you are sick in every part? And you have no sense of your malady, because sin has so impaired all your faculties, that you have no spiritual discernment. You do not discern your case to be dangerous, which is one of the worst symptoms you could have. It proves you to be far gone in spiritual lethargy, so that the less sense you have, the greater is your danger. And is not this a dangerous disease which makes the patient insensible? For how can he avoid perishing of it, while conscience, which ought to give the alarm, is seared with a hot iron, and the other faculties of the soul are past feeling? This is the scripture account of your condition, and if it has not convinced you, may the Lord God Almighty make you sensible of your malady, that you may apply to the great physician of souls for the balm of Gilead along with those convinced sinners, who are now waiting upon him for the sovereign remedy.

2. When sinners are first brought to a sense of

their guilt and of their danger, and conscience begins to do its duty, they are apt to write bitter things against themselves; and through unbelief to reject the offered mercies of the gospel. They feel the wounds of sin more sharp and painful, than ever its pleasures had been sweet and delightful. The law stirs up guilt, terrifies their consciences with its threatenings, sets God before their eyes as armed with almighty justice to inflict the threatened punishment, and they see no way open to escape. Speak to persons in this distress of the balm of Gilead, the remedy appointed of God for their diseases; they cannot believe it is able to heal them, or if they are brought to believe this, yet they reject the comforts of the blessed medicine, for want of faith to apply it to themselves. Let us consider this case a little. My brethren, sin has wounded your bodies and souls, and you are become sensible of the malady. You feel the anguish of it, and you desire to be healed. What objection have you to the remedy which the Lord God has appointed for your recovery? Has it not virtue to heal your wounded consciences? You know what the remedy is: It is the balm of Gilead, the most precious blood of the lamb of God, applied by the eternal Spirit, and heals not by any natural or physical qualities, but by a divine and spiritual efficacy. The power of God is always present with it to heal. You cannot therefore object against the medicine; because God has provided it, and he, with his own arm, renders it effectual for the cure of wounded consciences.

True, say you, I believe the remedy is infallible, but how do I know that God will apply it to my

soul? You are wounded, and it is balm for wounded consciences, therefore for yours. God has awakened you, he has brought you to the knowledge of your disease, and you feel the pain of it. For what reason has God done this? but that the sense of your misery might send you to the physician for his advice and assistance. When the enemy of souls sees you thus escaping out of his hands, he would try to persuade you, that the remedy is not for you; whereas you are the very persons to whom the gospel offers it. Christ says, he came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance; and you are sinners, you feel the misery of sin, and therefore Christ came to call you. Since you are sick, he calls you as much as if he had called you by name in the gospel, to receive of him the balm of Gilead to heal all your spiritual infirmities.

You think you should be happy, if you could believe this, but you find so many and such desperate wounds, so many soul-murdering sins, that you dare not believe the remedy is for such as you. But why not? Is not the medicine for sin-sick souls? And the more sick you are, the more you want the medicine, and be your case the worst that ever was, yet the virtue of the medicine is almighty. If from the sole of the foot, even to the crown of the head, there was no soundness in you, but in every part wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores, yet the balm of Gilead can make a perfect cure: yea, if you had ten thousand more wounds than you have, it could heal them all. Consider then how greatly you disparage and vilify the love and power of our divine physician, by supposing your sins more able to kill than he is to heal. Is not he the Lord God

Almighty, and are not all things possible with him? Oh! be not faithless then, but believing.

But perhaps guilt suggests to you, My case is singular, I have sinned against light and conviction; often did I resolve to leave my sins, but I as often broke my resolutions, and therefore I fear that I have sinned away my day of grace, and that there is no mercy for me. Your case is bad, but not desperate. Looking back on your past life, you should be humbled, but not despair; for are you not convinced of your want of the balm of *Gilead*, and does not it, by a divine virtue, heal all manner of sins? Sins against light, against many solemn resolutions, and against many warnings of conscience, as well as other sins? The medicine certainly can heal them all; because it is appointed of God for that purpose, and by his almighty power he renders it effectual, and therefore whatever keeps you from relying upon its power to heal you, is an enemy to your soul. Oh! pray against unbelief, for that is at the bottom of all your objections against this sovereign medicine, and may the Lord give you faith to be healed.

What! can it heal me, says some poor dejected broken-hearted sinner, who sees nothing but sin in his heart and life? Yes, it is appointed for you by name. "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." *Psalm* cxlvii. 3. The great physician has an especial regard for your case. He says, he was sent to heal the broken-hearted. But not such as I am, says one, my heart is worse than broken, it is dead to God, and to the things of God. Be it so. Our physician is famous for raising the dead. It is his office and his glory.

In the parable of the good *Samaritan*, he healed the man who was half dead. His soul was as dead to God as yours is. But the precious balm, which was applied to him, made him alive to God. The same remedy can quicken you, although you have been dead in trespasses and sins; and as you are so far quickened as to see your want of this remedy, may you soon experience its sovereign virtue, and receive from it saving health.

After many doubts and fears have been silenced, new ones still arise. Unbelief may perhaps have been suggested to some of your hearts; the medicine certainly can heal all cases, but I have nothing to recommend me to the physician. Have you nothing? Then this is your best recommendation. He always relieves poor distressed dying objects, who have nothing to bring him, but their sins and their miseries. He is therefore a physician, that he may relieve such; for by healing those, whom none else can heal, he gets all the glory; and by healing them freely, he exalts his sovereign grace. Thus he acted in the parable of the good *Samaritan*. What had the wounded traveller to recommend him? was it not, that he was miserable and helpless? This moved the Lord's compassion, and he shewed him mercy. "Go, and do thou likewise." Apply to the great physician, because thou art sick, and canst not heal thyself, and then he will exalt his rich grace and love, by freely forgiving thee all thy sins, and by pouring the balm of Gilead into thy wounded conscience to heal all thine infirmities.

When this objection, which arises from pride and unbelief, is removed, and we would persuade the

convinced sinner to rely upon the promises of health and salvation, which God has made in his word, he has still difficulties to get over. He is afraid it would be presumption in him to rely upon the promises, and to take comfort from believing, that he shall have his share and interest in them. Whereas he is the very person to whom the promises are made. His particular case is described in *Luke iv. 18*. Our Saviour says, the spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath appointed and commissioned me with full powers to relieve every distressed object, that shall apply to me for help. Are you a poor afflicted sinner? He has good news for you: He was ordained to preach the gospel to the poor. Have you a broken contrite heart? He is sent to heal the broken-hearted. Are you in bondage to sin and satan? He is sent to preach and to give deliverance to the captives. Is your understanding blind and ignorant of spiritual things? He is sent to preach and to give recovering of sight to the blind. Are you fast bound with the chains of sin, and has the iron entered into your soul? He is sent to set at liberty them that are bruised: Here is your character: you are poor broken-hearted captives, blind and miserable. Here is your promise; Christ is appointed of God, and has a divine commission to supply all your wants: Is it presumption then in you to apply this promise to yourselves? What after God has graciously made it for the comfort of your afflicted consciences will you say, It would be presumption in us to take comfort from it? My brethren, the promise cannot be broken. By relying upon it, it is yours. Your dependance

upon it calls upon God's faithfulness to fulfil it to you. And it is no presumption, it is a high act of faith, not to stagger at the promise through unbelief, but to give glory to God, by relying upon it. May he enable you thus to give glory to him, and you shall find that his promise is like himself, unchangeable, and that his word cannot be broken.

Since then there is balm in *Gilead* for wounded consciences, provided purposely for you, and since your objections against receiving it are groundless, why, my brethren, will you not apply to the almighty physician, and now ask his help? Oh! that this may be the accepted time, and this the day of your salvation! Fall down at his feet, implore his assistance, and his tender heart will melt with compassion towards you. If you are discouraged in your addresses to him, it is because you have not clear ideas of his power and love. He is almighty. He can heal the most broken heart, and the most wounded conscience; and his love never failed to influence his power to heal such cases, when they came before him. Keep not then pouring upon your wounds and sores. By looking too much at them, you cherish your doubts and fears. Look unto Jesus. Remember his advice, "Look unto me, and be ye saved." You should look into yourselves, to see your want of salvation, and look unto him for a supply of your wants. And that you may be supplied out of his fulness, believe his promises. Rely upon his faithfulness to fulfil them to your souls; and thereby you engage his power to give you health and salvation.

3. Blessed be his holy name, for exerting his divine virtue at this day, and for healing all manner of spiritual sickness and all manner of disease among the people. Great numbers, now alive, are witnesses for him, that his hand is not shortened. Still he saves his people from sin, and from all the maladies brought upon them by sin. You, my christian brethren, who have had experience of his divine power and love, ought to shew forth his praise. It becometh you well to be thankful. Much has been forgiven you, therefore you should love much. The sweet Psalmist of *Israel* calls upon you by his example to a grateful acknowledgement of the Lord's mercies—
“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within
“me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my
“soul, and forget not all his benefits; who for-
“giveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thine
“infirmities.” *Psalm ciii.* 1, 2, 3. After you have received such great benefits, it will be your delight to praise him with your lips, and with your lives. The health and strength which he has freely given, you will use in his service and to his glory, until he take you to himself, and give you more happy experience of his great salvation, by delivering your soul from every infirmity and corruption; and it will not be long before he will raise your bodies from the grave, and make them like his own glorious body. And then he will get himself honour indeed, when he shall heal both body and soul of all the wounds of sin, and shall heal them for ever and ever. That is the glory of our physician, he heals to eternity. He makes the spirit of just men perfect; and they stand before

the throne of God without any spot or stain of corruption. And in the morning of the resurrection, this corruptible body shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality. Thus he bestows eternal health and salvation upon both body and soul. Where is there, nay, where can there be such a Physician? There is none like unto thee, O Lord, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders. Still thou art displaying the wonders of thy power and love, and administering thy sovereign balm for recovering the health of the daughter of thy people. Oh! that thou wouldst display thy divine virtue among us this day. Arise, thou son of righteousness, upon all this congregation, with healing under thy beams, and save us from every malady of sin, from the pollution, from the guilt, and from the power of it, and save us from the punishment of it with thine eternal salvation. Hear us, though almighty Saviour, and answer us to the glory of the Father, and of the holy Spirit, three co-equal and co-eternal persons in one Jehovah, to whom we give honour and worship, and blessing and praise, now and for ever. Amen and Amen.

